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AN INQUIRY
INTO THE
EFFECT OF BAPTISM,
ACCORDING TO THE
SENSE OF HOLY SCRIPTURE,
AND OF THE
Church of England :

IN ANSWER TO
THE REVEREND DR. MANT'S TWO TRACTS
ON
REGENERATION AND CONVERSION.

BY JOHN SCOTT, M. A.

VICAR OF NORTH FERRIBY, AND MINISTER OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH,
HULL, ETC.

Second Edition,
WITH AN APPENDIX.

Gratia sacramentum aliquando præcedit, aliquando sequitur, aliquando nec sequitur. THEODORET.

Omnibus commune est lavacrum regenerationis, sed ipsa gratia....non communis est omnibus. AUGUSTINE.

All receive not the grace of God which receive the sacraments of his grace. HOOKER.

He is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God.

ST. PAUL.

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* * * To accommodate the purchasers of the former edition, the Appendix is sold separate, price 1s.

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.

WHEN a writer under ordinary circumstances lays his sentiments before the public, he makes his way to attention as the nature of his subject, his previous reputation, his talents, and the force of his arguments may enable him. But it is under no ordinary circumstances that Dr. Mant is presented to our notice, in the publication on which I intend to offer some animadversions. Independently of his distinctions as Chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury, a Bampton Lecturer at Oxford, and one of the two persons selected to compile and publish a commentary on the scriptures, under the patronage of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge; the single fact of his tracts having been adopted by that society, and circulated throughout the kingdom with the annual packet sent to all its members, must draw peculiar attention to them; and make every one, who feels concerned for the interests of true religion, and the welfare of the church of England, somewhat solicitous respecting the spirit which they breathe, and the sentiments which they are calculated to disseminate. In this view, especially, I have been led to examine them: and sorry I am to state, as the result of my examination, a full conviction, that their contents are such, that the conductors of the society can never justify, to a great number of its supporters, to the church of England, and to the Christian world at large, their having employed the funds and influence of the institution to render them current amongst us.

Not to prejudge the question, hereafter to be investigated, concerning the character of the doctrines maintained in these tracts, is it for a society which has been by high authority styled 'national,' and which at least aspires to be the society of the church of England, without respect to subordinate discriminations, to espouse and circulate among 'the community at large,'* writings which continually speak of 'a party,' a 'sect,' 'in the very bosom of the 'church,' who 'arrogate to themselves the distinction of 'being her only faithful sons,' but 'whose preaching nevertheless is in *irreconcilable hostility* to her *unequivocal* 'and numerous declarations:' on whose banners 'regeneration is, as it were, inscribed' as a 'watchword,'—'regeneration, not the fruit of Christ's holy ordinance of 'baptism, but the effect of their declamation:' whose principles 'in some sense *do despite unto the Spirit of grace*:' and who 'would fain fasten THEIR HERESY upon our church, 'and sedulously labour to propagate it as her's?' † I have much respect, in many points of view, for Dr. Mant, and I would fain hope that he is not, on the whole, a man of an uncharitable and unchristian temper: but I cannot refrain from asking, Is all this conciliatory? is it healing? is it salutary? is it adapted to the exigencies of the times? is it calculated to serve the church? is it what it becomes 'the Society for 'promoting Christian Knowledge,' to use its power and resources in circulating?—I, for one, feel myself entitled to remonstrate against what I so much disapprove, not only as a member of the society, but as having collected money for it, and having publicly recommended it to support. And, might I hope to be honoured with a hearing from my superiors, I would earnestly entreat those of the heads of our church, who take part in the proceedings of the institution, seriously to consider the tendency of such things as have been cited. It is not impossible that they may act

* Title-page of the Tracts.

† Tracts, p. 15, 21, 23, 28, &c.

more forcibly in the way of *recoil*, than in that of direct straight-forward movement.*—Hitherto it has been generally esteemed an odious and obnoxious proceeding, for one part of the clergy to reproach and criminate another : but now they are taught to do it under the sanction of the most extensive and most dignified association that exists within the pale of the church !

But I proceed to the more particular consideration of the contents of the tracts, their doctrines and their arguments.

* From what I know of the sentiments prevailing among no considerable bodies of people, I am persuaded, that the enemies of the church have not, for a good while past, had so powerful an instrument put into their hands for her injury, as these tracts. In fact, I know that they have already been used against her, by persons willing, for this end, to assume that Dr. M. correctly exhibits her doctrines.

Since the publication of the former edition of this work, the conductors of the Eclectic Review have shown that they clearly perceive their advantage, and are not wanting in a disposition to improve it.

CHAPTER I.

On the effect of baptism—Language of the Church—Dr. Mant's language—His sentiments still undefined—Nature of regeneration.

IT is well known, that, in very early times, strong language came into use, in the Christian church, concerning baptism, and the blessings connected with it. On what principles it was thus used may hereafter, in some degree, appear.*

It is likewise well known, that the church of England has seen good to retain a portion of this language, particularly by speaking of every one, whom she has admitted to baptism, as ‘born again,’ and ‘regenerated by God’s ‘Holy Spirit.’ But it is by no means sufficient merely to quote this language: it remains to be inquired, in what sense, and especially, as it appears to me, upon what grounds, the church uses it. Different modes of explaining it have been adopted by high authorities.

Many have attached to the terms ‘regeneration’ and ‘new birth,’ in this connection, a lower and qualified sense. This was done, in particular, by the able and excellent Bishop Hopkins, whom Dr. M. quotes for the assertion, ‘that baptismal regeneration must be acknowledged ‘by all, that will not wilfully shut their eyes against the ‘clear evidence of Scripture ;’† at the same time, how-

* Close of c. ix.

† P. 40. The quotation is not very fairly made. The bishop’s words are, ‘such a baptismal regeneration as this must needs be acknowledged ‘by all,’ &c. Works, 8vo. Vol. ii. p. 423. He is speaking of an ‘external, ecclesiastical,’ and merely ‘relative’ sanctification; in short

ever, intimating, that the bishop has ‘qualified the position’ by ‘a limitation.’ The limitation, it may be collected from the next page but one, is no less important than this, that he ‘considers baptismal regeneration, as ‘merely admitting us members of the visible church, and ‘not as entitling us to eternal life; and contends for another regeneration, independent of the washing by water, ‘and identified by him with conversion, renovation, and ‘the like.’*

Had Dr. M. used the term baptismal regeneration in a sense like this, there might have been no dispute with him. He, however, admits of no such qualified interpretation. His language upon the subject is as follows:

—‘*That supernatural grace, which was thereby to be conferred,*’—namely by the sacrament of baptism,—‘*through the instrumentality of water, and by the agency of the Holy Ghost.*’ P. 8.

‘Baptism is a *new birth*, by which we enter into the new world, the new creation, the blessings and spiritualities of the kingdom.’—‘From this time forward we have a *new principle* put into us, the Spirit of grace, which, besides our soul and body, is a principle of action;’ &c. † P. 9.—So also ‘a new principle of life infused,’ &c. P. 50.

‘By that sacrament we are made Christians, and are *born anew* of water and of the Holy Spirit.’ P. 10.

The church ‘*supposes, in strict conformity with the scriptures, not merely that all real Christians are regenerate by God’s Holy Spirit, by which I understand all those, who live a Christian life; but that those also are so regenerated, to whom baptism is rightly administered, not-*

of ‘admission into the visible church.’ Dr. M. however, as I have said, does intimate ‘a limitation.’

* P. 42.

† Quoted from Bp. Taylor.

‘ withstanding by their future conduct they may forfeit the privileges of their new birth.’ P. 10, 11.*

‘ That the sacramental character of the institution should be steadily kept in view, we are reminded of *the regeneration* conveyed by it to the baptized.’ P. 16.

‘ We maintain *the regenerating efficacy* of baptism to those who die before they commit actual sin.’ P. 22.

‘ To deny the *regenerating effect* of baptism is in some sense to do despite unto the Spirit of grace.’ P. 28.

‘ When it may be satisfactorily argued from the highest authority, that baptism is *the vehicle of regeneration*, why should we look for any other?’ P. 29.

‘ It is the doctrine of the holy scriptures, that we are by baptism made *heirs of salvation* through Christ; &c.—If then we cannot become heirs of salvation, except we be born of water and of the Spirit, and if we be made heirs of salvation by baptism, I see not how we are to evade the consequence, that the outward washing of baptism is attended by *the sanctification of the Spirit*, and that we are born of water and of the Spirit when we are baptized.’ P. 29.

—‘ Which confirms an opinion presently to be insisted on, that *no other than baptismal regeneration is possible in this world.*’ P. 32.

‘ *Sanctification and purity*, unspotted and unblemished *holiness*, are here† attributed to the church of Christ as ‘ the effect of the washing of water.’ P. 33.—He adds, of course, by ‘ the operation of the Spirit.’ But I here quote the passage for the terms with which it opens.

‘ We argue for baptism being *the vehicle of regeneration*, ‘ because it is *the vehicle of salvation.*’ P. 35.

* The words in italics, in this passage, are noted as a quotation from Mr. Overton’s True Churchman, &c. p. 109.

† Viz. in Eph. v. 25—27.

‘ To deny *the regenerating influence* of baptism is to deny its sacramental character.’ P. 36.

‘ If ever *the new birth* be not conveyed by baptism rightly administered; or if, when once regenerated, it be (I will not say necessary, but) possible for any one to be born again, doubtless there is scriptural authority to that purpose.’ P. 40.

Supposing it to convey no ‘ *effectual regeneration*,’ he makes a person to affirm, ‘ It is destitute of an inward and spiritual grace; it is no sacrament; it is a non-essential.’ P. 51.

—‘ Ordained as it was by Christ himself, with *a promise of salvation* annexed to its legitimate administration.’ P. 51.

It appears, then, that by ‘ the regeneration of baptism,’ Dr. M. understands ‘ a supernatural grace conferred,’—‘ a new principle put into us,’ ‘ a new principle of life’ and ‘ of action,’*—‘ even the Spirit of grace’—‘ the sanctification of the Spirit,’—which ‘ makes us heirs of salvation,’—and ‘ entitles us to eternal life.’† And he believes, that all this extends to every one, to whom ‘ baptism is rightly administered:’ that to deny this is ‘ to deny its sacramental character,’—is ‘ heresy,’—is ‘ in some sense doing despite to the Spirit of grace.’ And, finally, he holds, ‘ that no other regeneration is possible in this world.’

In the above citations, if I have not collected every term by which Dr. M. describes the effect of baptism, yet I trust I have omitted nothing by which his views of the subject might be elucidated. And truly, after such accumulated and diversified phraseology, to complain of the want of explanation may seem a little unreasonable. Yet this complaint I am constrained to make. Nearly all this language, or even the whole of it when compared together, appears to me indefinite, indistinct, and not very consistent

* P. 9, 50.

† P. 42.

with itself, and with other parts of the work. Far from being calculated ‘to convey correct notions of regeneration;’* it by no means indicates the writer to have entered into the consideration of the various questions which belong to his subject.

For instance, it might be asked, Is baptism itself regeneration? or does it ‘convey’ regeneration? or is it only ‘attended by’ regeneration? Each of these questions suggests an idea distinct from the others. Each sentiment has had its abettors; and each might claim the support of Dr. M.’s authority: the first on the ground of the quotation from page 9, beginning, ‘baptism *is* a new birth;’ the last on the ground of the second quotation from page 29; and the intermediate one, on the ground of several of the quotations which have been made, and of his prevailing language.

Again: Does baptism convey its regenerating influence only to infants, or to all ‘to whom it is rightly administered?’ Certainly we should not hesitate to pronounce the latter to be Dr. M.’s opinion, from various passages above cited,† and from the general tenor of his tracts. What then shall we say to the following sentence, in page 22? ‘We maintain the regenerating efficacy of baptism ‘to those who die before they commit actual sin.’ Has it, then, no ‘regenerating efficacy’ at the time, to those who live afterwards to commit actual sin? If so, Dr. M. can never know whether to return thanks for the regeneration of an infant whom he baptizes, unless he can first know that it will not live to commit actual sin!—Has it, again, no ‘regenerating efficacy’ to adults, ‘rightly receiving it?’ And do both the classes, which have been named, need, or, at least, *may* they need ‘another regeneration’ distinct from that of baptism?‡ This must be the case, if

* Title-page of the Tracts.

† See quotations from p. 11, 12, 16, 28, 32, 36, 40, 51.

‡ P. 42.

with them baptism be attended with no ‘regenerating efficacy.’

But the main question is that which relates to *the nature* of regeneration. Unless it be settled what we mean by the term, there is no end to the dispute.—Dr. M. charges Bishop Hopkins, and other more modern divines, with confounding it with ‘conversion, renovation,’ ‘a change of heart,’ ‘and the like.’* Certainly he is *not far* from the truth, in supposing that many of us do pretty closely connect it with conversion: yet from a work, with which so near a follower of the bishop of Lincoln ought not to be unacquainted, he might have learned, that even here he is not quite correct, when he asserts, that we ‘identify regeneration with conversion.’† Waving that point, however, in what does Dr. M. suppose regeneration actually to consist? As the former of the two prelates just mentioned observes, ‘The ‘grace, that concurs unto the great change,’ which a sinner undergoes, ‘when he is translated from a ‘state of nature unto a state of grace, is of two sorts: ‘either such as alters *the relations*, wherein we stand unto ‘God; or such as alters *the dispositions* and habit of our ‘souls.’ Of the former sort is *justification*, which does not express ‘how our heart is changed towards God,’ but that our sins are put away, and that we are accepted to God’s favour. Of the latter kind is *sanctification*, which denotes a purification of our ‘moral habits and principles.’‡ These two things, though inseparable, are essentially distinct, and must be carefully distinguished by him, who would write with any precision upon theological subjects. Of which kind, then, does Dr. M. understand the change of regeneration to be?

* P. 41, 42.

† Scott’s Remarks on Bp. Tomline’s Refutation of Calvinism, vol. i. p. 177, 209, 246, 247.

‡ Bp. Hopkins’s Works, vol. ii. p. 475, 476, 8vo.—See Note I. in the Appendix to this work.

Is it an internal and moral change, turning fallen man from the love of sin to holiness, “the sanctification of the Spirit,” by which he is to be restored to “the image of God?” or is it a change of state and circumstances? Is it the remission of sins? If the former, then why does he censure those who identify it with ‘a change of heart?’ But if not, what are we to understand by his own language, when he speaks of ‘*a new principle of life* being infused’ into us, the opposite of being ‘dead in trespasses and sins;’*—of ‘the outward washing of baptism being attended by the sanctification of the Spirit;’†—of ‘*sanctification and purity, unspotted and unblemished holiness,*’ being ‘attributed to the church of Christ, as the effect of the washing of water,’ under ‘the operation of the Spirit;’‡—and of ‘*dying unto sin* in baptism?’§ If all this do not mean a moral change, ‘a change of heart,’ what does it mean?—But if it do, what, again, are we to understand by the following extraordinary passage concerning St. Paul? ‘Where is St. Paul described as regenerated, until Ananias baptized him and washed away his sins? That he was converted, and that his heart was renewed, is evident from the language, which he uttered when he had fallen to the earth, and from the obedience which he paid to the voice from heaven. That he was not regenerated until a later period is evident; for when Ananias called on him to be baptized, he was still under the pollution of his sins.’||

On the mode of reasoning, adopted in this passage, I at present offer no remark. But I must ask, what is here meant by ‘the pollution of his sins,’ which the regeneration of baptism was to wash away? Does it mean depravity,—corrupt disposition? If so, had not his ‘conversion,’ and the ‘renewal of his heart,’ removed it? Or does it mean

* P. 50 and 9.

† P. 29.

‡ P. 33.

§ P. 39.

|| P. 43.

guilt,—liability to punishment? If so, are we to suppose a man ‘converted,’ ‘renewed,’ ‘obedient,’ and consequently penitent and believing, yet unpardoned? Is this compatible with the explicit and acknowledged doctrine of scripture?—And, further, the question recurs, If regeneration signify the removal of guilt by pardon, where was the propriety of all the language so recently quoted, which describes it as the removal of depravity by ‘sanctification?’

Our views of regeneration (if, without any pretensions to be the ‘accredited advocate’ of a party,* I may presume to speak on behalf of many of my brethren as well as myself,) are surely more definite, and more consistent with themselves, whether they be more ‘correct’ or not. We consider the term as equivalent, or nearly so, to other scriptural phrases, such as the “quickenings of those who were dead in trespasses and sins,” “a new heart,” “a new creature.” The necessity for this change is laid in the corruption and depravity of human nature; which are such as to make a moral renovation of the whole man indispensable to his “seeing the kingdom of God,”—whether our Lord meant, and whether we are to describe, this change by the term regeneration or not. The effect of it is, to turn man from sin to God and holiness. Though the word regeneration may be sometimes used with more latitude, we generally understand by it the commencement of “that sanctification of the Spirit,” which must restore us “to the image of God,” and “make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,” without however excluding the further progress and advancement of the change.† The Holy Spirit of God is the author of the work: and, where adult subjects are concerned, the word of God the ordinary means of effecting it.‡ Baptism, we consider as

* Tracts, p. 65.

† See Appendix, Note II.

‡ James i. 18. 1 Pet. i. 23. Eph. v. 26.—‘Christ saith, *Except a*

‘ the sign of regeneration ; ’ * as a ‘ pledge ’ † of it ‘ to those who receive baptism rightly ; ’ and also as ‘ a means ’ ‡ by which the blessing *may* be, and, especially in the cases of infants, we trust, frequently is conveyed, in answer to the devout prayers which accompany the administration of this sacrament. But as to its ‘ *entitling* us to ‘ eternal life,’ this we think, in all cases, a misapplication of terms. We make a marked distinction between our *title* to eternal life, and our “ *meetness* ” for it. Christ, and his “ obedience unto death ” in our behalf, embraced by a living faith, constitute our only *title* to heaven, the sole ground of our admission to that blessed state ; though personal holiness is the necessary *preparation* for it, “ without which no man shall see the Lord.”

Such, I believe I shall not err in stating, are the sentiments ‡ of those, who are reproached as ‘ the self-denominated evangelical party.’ Whose views, their’s or their opponents’, best agree with scripture, and the authorized writings of our church, is to be the subject of further inquiry. §

‘ *man be born again from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . .* Saith St. Peter, *We be born again. How ? Not by a mortal seed, but by an immortal. What is this immortal seed ? By the word of the living God ; by the word of God preached and opened. Thus cometh in our NEW BIRTH.*’ Bp. Latimer.

* Church Art. xxvii.

† Catechism.

‡ I gladly refer to Bp. Hopkins on ‘ the Nature and Necessity of Regeneration,’ for a more enlarged statement. Works, vol. ii. p. 468.

§ See Appendix, Note III.

CHAPTER II.

The argument from Scripture.—Dr. Mant's scriptural authorities—His observations on them examined—His negative argument from Scripture.

DR. Mant professes himself well aware, that no authority 'is admissible for the foundation of a doctrine, except that of the inspired writings.'* He proceeds, therefore, 'to state several scriptural authorities, on which the notion of our being regenerated by baptism may be incontrovertibly maintained.'†

Let us then examine what is the decisive testimony of scripture, by which he imagines, that he thus 'incontrovertibly' establishes his views of the subject.

The first passage is part of our Saviour's discourse with Nicodemus, which he uses as a text. I shall place the words entire in the reader's view.

John iii. 1—12 : " There was a man of the pharisees, " named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews : the same came " to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know " that thou art a teacher come from God : for no man can " do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with " him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, " I say unto thee, Except a man be *born again* he cannot " see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, " How can a man be born when he is old ? Can he enter " the second time into his mother's womb, and be born ? " Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except " a man be born *of water and of the Spirit*, he cannot " enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of

* P. 37.

† P. 30.

“ the flesh is flesh ; and that which is *born of the Spirit* is
“ spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be
“ *born again*. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou
“ hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it
“ cometh, and whither it goeth : so is every one that is
“ *born of the Spirit*. Nicodemus answered and said unto
“ him, How can these things be ? Jesus answered and said
“ unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not
“ these things ? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak
“ that we do know, and testify that we have seen ; and ye
“ receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things,
“ and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of
“ heavenly things ? ”

The other passages adduced are the following.

St. Mark xvi. 15, 16 : “ Go ye into all the world, and
“ preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth
“ and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that believeth not
“ shall be damned.”

Tit. iii. 4—7 : “ But, after that the kindness and love
“ of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works
“ of righteousness which we have done, but according to
“ his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration,
“ and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us
“ abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour : that,
“ being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs ac-
“ cording to the hope of eternal life.”

1 Cor. vi. 11 : “ And such were some of you ; but ye are,
“ washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the
“ name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

Col. ii. 12, 13 : “ Buried with Christ in baptism, where-
“ in also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the
“ operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.
“ And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumci-
“ sion of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him.”

Rom. vi. 3—5, 8—11 : “ Know ye not that so many of
“ us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into
“ his death ? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism
“ into death ; that, like as Christ was raised up from the
“ dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should
“ walk in newness of life.....Now, if we be dead with
“ Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him :
“ knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no
“ more ; death hath no more dominion over him. For,
“ in that he died, he died unto sin once : but, in that he
“ liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also
“ yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto
“ God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Eph. v. 25—27 : “ Christ loved the church, and gave
“ himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with
“ the washing of water by the word ; that he might present
“ it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or
“ wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it should be holy
“ and without blemish.”

1 Cor. xii. 13 : “ By one Spirit are we all baptized into
“ one body.”

Acts ii. 38 : “ Repent, and be baptized every one of
“ you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of
“ sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Acts x. 47, 48 : “ Can any man forbid water, that these
“ should not be baptized, which have received the Holy
“ Ghost as well as we ? And he commanded them to be
“ baptized in the name of the Lord.”

Acts xxii. 16 : Ananias to Paul : “ And now why tarriest
“ thou ? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins,
“ calling on the name of the Lord.”

These, with an allusion to 1 John iii. 2, and 1 Peter i.
3, 23, which will be noticed hereafter, constitute Dr. M.'s
scriptural authorities : and ‘ from them he apprehends it

‘ to be established, as the general doctrine of the gospel,
 ‘ that the new birth or regeneration, which is pronounced
 ‘ by our Saviour to be necessary to salvation, or (as he ex-
 ‘ presses it,) to seeing or entering into the kingdom of God,
 ‘ is effected by the operation of the Holy Ghost at baptism,’*
 —at baptism ‘ *exclusively*,’† and *always* at baptism where
 ‘ it is rightly administered.’ ‡

Now let the reader once more peruse these passages, with a view to ascertain what demonstration he finds in them of Dr. M.’s doctrines, that ‘ spiritual regeneration,’—‘ a supernatural grace,’—‘ a new principle of life ’ and ‘ of action,’—‘ the sanctification of the Spirit,’ which ‘ makes us heirs of salvation,’ and ‘ entitles us to eternal life,’ always accompanies baptism; and is ‘ exclusively ’ confined to baptism; so ‘ that no other than baptismal regeneration ‘ is possible in this world.’ No unprejudiced reader, I think, can make this examination, without feeling astonished, that such an edifice should have been raised upon such a basis; such a system spun out of so scanty materials! He must, I conceive, feel no small surprise at observing what passes with Dr. M. for ‘ incontrovertible ’ proof!

But let us hear Dr. M.’s comments on his scriptural proofs.

On John iii. he observes, ‘ It should appear, that our Saviour was here alluding by anticipation to the sacrament of baptism, which he intended to ordain; and to that supernatural grace, which was thereby to be conferred through the instrumentality of water, and by the agency of the Holy Ghost; adopting not only the ceremony itself,’ which had been used by the Jews, and which he meant to exalt to more noble and spiritual purposes; but also the very term, by which the Jews had described the change wrought in the baptized.’ §

* P. 35.

† P. 32, 33.

‡ P. 40.

§ P. 8.

The last clause is explained by what he had previously said, that ‘ proselytes, purified and admitted into the Jewish church by baptism, were said to be regenerated or born again.’ * If so, and if this were established and customary phraseology, it must have been familiar to Nicodemus, “ a teacher of Israel ;” and familiar to him, though in a lower, yet in ‘ a similar sense,’ † to that in which our Lord used it. But who can possibly read his astonished reply, and for a moment believe this ? “ How can “ a man,” he exclaims, “ be born when he is old ? Can “ he enter a second time into his mother’s womb, and be “ born ?” Is this the language of a man accustomed to the idea, and to ‘ the very term,’ of being “ born again ?” ‡

The rest of the passage may be suffered to pass for the present, with the remark, that it is opinion only, and not argument.

In a subsequent part of his work, Dr. M. observes, with reference to the same passage of scripture : ‘ If spiritual regeneration be not conferred by baptism, when, (we may reasonably demand,) and by what means is it conferred ? In what other ceremony, and at what other season, shall we find that joint operation of water and of the Holy Spirit, of which Christ affirms we must be born ? I say that joint operation ; for surely those, which Christ himself hath joined together, it is not for man to put asunder.’ He adds, ‘ I am the more disposed to press this argument, and to bring it forward in the most prominent point of view, not only because it appears to me decisive on the question ; but also, because the importance of the argument seems to be recognized by the silence of our opponents, who in their zeal to enforce regeneration, the being born again, the being born of God, the being born of the Spirit, studiously keep out of sight the in-

* P. 6.

† P. 8.

‡ See Appendix, Note IV.

‘strument, whereby Christ says we must be born again.’* And shortly after: ‘For the purpose, therefore, of regeneration, we conceive this union of water as the instrument, and of the Spirit as the efficient principle, to be absolutely necessary.’ ‘We are justified in contending, that for the express purpose of regeneration, not only is his (the Spirit’s) operation necessary, but that it must also (humanly speaking) be administered through the mediation of water. It is not for man to dispense with the ordinances of God.’

Such are Dr. M.’s reasonings upon the discourse with Nicodemus. I can believe him to be very sincerely convinced by them: but I must wonder if to others they should appear very conclusive.

We will admit that, in the expression “born of water,” our Lord alludes to baptism, though, as Dr. M. observes, it must have been ‘by anticipation,’ since that sacrament was not yet ordained: and I conceive the same language might, without impropriety, have been used, had the appointment of baptism never been intended. My reasons for such an opinion will appear as we proceed.

Dr. M., indeed, speaks of ‘water’ as ‘the instrument, whereby Christ says we must be born again.’† But it is not very conceivable how *water*, literally taken, being applied to the body, should be *instrumental* to the regeneration of the soul.‡ Nor does our Lord’s language necessarily, or even naturally, convey such an idea. It might mean more: it may mean less. The expression is precisely the same respecting water, as respecting the Spirit: “born of water and of the Spirit.” Yet Dr. M. himself will not go the length of interpreting it of both in exactly *the same* sense. He lowers its meaning, as it is applied to the former, to the notion of instrumentality: I see not, therefore, what right he

* P. 25, 26.

† P. 26, 27, 28.

‡ See Appendix, Note V.

has to condemn us, if we consider it as expressing only that of sign, or emblem.—I speak here of the *water*, that which alone our Lord names, and that which Dr. M. calls ‘the instrument;’ not of the sacrament of baptism, which we consider as being much more than a mere sign.

Dr. M. lays great stress on what he calls ‘that joint operation of water and of the Holy Spirit, of which,’ according to him, ‘Christ affirms we must be born.’ He is ‘disposed to press this argument, and to bring it forward in the most prominent point of view.’ He talks, in this connection, of ‘putting asunder those things which Christ himself hath joined together;’ of ‘dispensing with the ordinances of God;’* and other things of serious import. But, before this has any weight, he must prove, much more decisively than by the mere citation of the words, that such ‘a joint operation,’ and such an ordination of God, inseparably connecting regeneration with the use of water, are implied in the terms “born of water and of the Spirit.” I would venture to ask, Are they even so clear upon the point, that any one would have inferred from them *alone*, that Christians were to be baptized at all? I readily allow, that ‘a single text of scripture, properly understood, may serve for the foundation of a doctrine:’† but, to serve for the foundation of such a doctrine as that of Dr. M., it must be much more decisive, and the interpretation much more clearly ‘proper,’ than what is now before us.

Let me beg the reader’s attention to a very observable circumstance in the passage of scripture, under consideration, which Dr. M.’s remarks upon it would not have prepared him to expect, and which is by no means undeserving of notice in the argument. It is true, that, in his *second* assertion of the necessity of being born again, (v. 5.) our Saviour does introduce the mention of “water:” but not

* P. 25, 28.

† P. 30.

only had he said nothing of it in the first, (v. 3.) which, indeed, was more concise and general; but he drops all notice of it, all allusion to it, in every one of the three subsequent instances, in which he speaks of the same thing in the same discourse; insisting only upon being “born of the Spirit” as the great essential matter intended. (See v. 6, 7, 8.) As it has been justly remarked, in the whole passage ‘*one word intimates the outward sign, all else relates to the thing signified.*’* If any of us, therefore, ‘in our zeal to enforce regeneration, the being born again, the being born of God, the being born of the Spirit,’—not ‘studiously keep out of sight’† what Dr. M. calls ‘the instrument,’—but attribute to it a less necessary efficacy, than he does; I trust we do not ‘put asunder what Christ hath joined together,’ but rather imitate his example, and comply with his instructions, both as to the letter and the spirit of them.

Let me further ask, while the expression “born of water and of the Spirit” is under consideration, does Dr. M. recollect no other instance, in which, and that in speaking of the self-same subject, the operation of the Spirit is connected in a very similar manner, with another material substance? I allude to the words of St. John the Baptist concerning our Saviour: “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and WITH FIRE.” Might we not from this passage argue ‘the joint operation’ of the Holy Ghost and of fire, much in the same way, and with pretty much the same degree of force, as Dr. M. has argued that of the Holy Ghost and of water, from our Lord’s words? Might we not proceed, in language resembling his, to observe upon the presumption of ‘putting asunder’ what he, whose baptism and whose commission were “from heaven,” hath ‘joined together,’ and joined together in speaking ex-

* Scott’s Remarks, &c. Vol. i. p. 187.

† P. 26.

pressly of what Christ should do for his people? Yet no one would hesitate to pronounce such arguments misapplied in this case: no one imagines that "the fire" is more than an emblem in St. John's address: * it might therefore, at least, be, that "the water" was no more than an emblem in our Lord's discourse. †—Accordingly a further analogy is observable in the two cases. Just as our Lord once mentions water, and then drops the allusion, so, while two of the evangelists give us John's testimony with the sign expressed, as well as the thing signified, the other two omit all mention of the sign, and notice only that which was represented by it. ‡

We see from this instance that a purifying element may be properly named in connection with the Holy Ghost, 'the Sanctifier,' even when there is no intention that that element should be at all employed as 'an instrument,' or even actually used as a sign of his operation: and so our Lord might have named "water," even if he had had no intention of instituting the sacrament of baptism.—I admit, however, that he did allude to that sacrament; yet, I believe Dr. M. would find it no easy task TO PROVE, that "the "water" of baptism was alluded to, as any other than what our church expressly says it is, 'an outward and 'visible sign;' § or that the opinion of a reformer, whom Bishop Horsley pronounced one of the most valuable of commentators, is so erroneous as he thinks it: namely,

* It is true, that, when the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples at the day of pentecost, "cloven tongues like as of fire" appeared "sitting," as it were, "upon each of them." But I suppose no one will take TONGUES, "LIKE as of fire," resting upon a few of our Lord's disciples, as a literal BAPTISM with fire, or as *that* "baptism with fire" which was promised to his disciples generally.

† I again beg it may be observed, that I am not calling *the sacrament of baptism* a mere emblem: I am here simply treating of the one expression "*born of water and of the Spirit.*" John iii. 5.

‡ See Matt. iii. 11. Lu. iii. 16. and compare Mar. i. 8. John i. 33.

§ Catechism.

that, in this passage, ‘water and the Spirit mean only the Spirit, who cleanses after the manner of water.’ *

But it is little less than painful to spend time in discussion, which may have the appearance of being contentious, if not also trifling, concerning a portion of the divine oracles, of so solemn character as the discourse with Nicodemus. Let us take a general view of the passage as it lies in the gospel, and try what impression it makes, and surely was designed to make, upon the serious reader’s mind. In proceeding to this view, however, it may be well to recollect, that, if the passage relate to baptism, or what necessarily or inseparably accompanies baptism, then it means, as one somewhat awfully said, ‘nothing,—nothing ‘at all to us,’ who have received baptism. Whatever our character, we have then nothing to do with being born again, but, as Dr. M. expresses it, to be ‘filled with all ‘joy and peace in believing that we partake of it.’ † Nay, further, if baptism and the concomitants of baptism were all, it was *for the time then present* ‘nothing’ to Nicodemus; for our Lord only ‘intended to ordain’ ‡ the sacrament of baptism, and had not yet ordained it.

The interview between Nicodemus and the Saviour is

* P. 41. So also Bp. Hopkins: ‘*To be born of water and of the Spirit* may admit of a double interpretation: for either, first, by ‘water is meant baptism;’—or, secondly, it ‘may denote to us the manner of the Spirit’s proceeding in the work of regeneration. *Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit*: that is, except he be ‘renewed by the Holy Ghost, working as water; leaving the same effect upon the soul in cleansing and purifying it from sinful defilements, as water doth upon the body in washing off contracted dirt and filth. Nor, indeed, is this manner of expression strange to the holy scripture: for John Baptist, speaking of Christ, tells them, that he should baptize them *with the Holy Ghost and with fire*; that is, he should baptize them with the Holy Ghost, working as fire,’ which ‘eats out and consumes the rust and dross of metals,’ &c. Works, vol. ii. p. 468, 469.

† P. 24.

‡ Tracts, p. 8.

understood to have taken place, at the first passover after the latter had commenced his public ministry. Nicodemus was a man of rank, "a ruler of the Jews;" a man of learning, "a master," or teacher, "of Israel;" and a man of religious seriousness. Solemnly impressed with what he had seen and heard concerning Jesus, and convinced that he was a "teacher come from God," since "no man could do the miracles that he did, except God were with him;" he breaks through the prejudices of his education, of his rank in life, and of his associates, and visits our Lord "by night," to learn what his doctrines really were, and what he was commissioned to teach mankind. We may naturally suppose him desirous of knowing, especially, what Jesus had to communicate, of which the Jewish instructors were not already in possession. To this man, thus circumstanced, our blessed Lord addressed himself with an apparent abruptness, which only marks the importance of what he delivered. With a twofold solemn asseveration, used only by himself, and by him only on the most serious occasions, "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God:" he can neither be a true member of the church under the Messiah's government here on earth, nor come to heaven hereafter.

Now suppose our Lord to intend, by this figure, an internal and radical 'change of heart,' wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost, and making a man "a new creature," conformed to "the image," and fit for the kingdom, of God; but without which fallen man can neither serve God acceptably, nor be saved: suppose this, and the address is evidently, by its weight and importance, worthy of the speaker, and worthy of the occasion. Then indeed our Lord, as we should have expected him to do, fixes at once upon a great, essential, and distinguishing

doctrine of true religion: a doctrine which had been taught, as he intimates,* in the Old Testament, and which is taught in every part of scripture, but which was overlooked by Jewish teachers, as it has too often been by others also; and which it was one design of his coming to place in due prominence. Then, indeed, he began, with this “master of Israel,” with what is fundamental to all true and spiritual religion among men. Then as, in the latter part of his discourse, he delivered the doctrine which relates to the JUSTIFICATION of sinful man, through the redemption of ‘God the Son:’ so, in the former part, he delivered that which relates to the other great branch of our salvation, SANCTIFICATION by the power and grace of ‘God the Holy Ghost.’

But now put the case, that our Lord here speaks only of baptism and what baptism conveys, and we can hardly forbear asking, What was there so suitable to the occasion—especially considering that Christian baptism was not yet appointed? What, that was of a nature so superior to pharisaical instruction? What, indeed, that was calculated very clearly to convey the idea intended? In the language of one, whose words I gladly adopt, ‘I desire profoundly to reverence the divine wisdom’ of my Saviour, ‘and to be silent in humble submission, when he proposes instruction,’ either in substance or ‘in language, such as I should not previously have expected.... Yet it is impossible for me to admit,’ that baptism is, in ‘the present case,’ even *a principal subject* of which he treats, ‘without far stronger proof than has yet been adduced.’†

Let us proceed with the discourse, and see to which view of its design the sequel affords countenance. Nicodemus having expressed his astonishment at what he heard,

* V. 10.

† Scott’s Remarks, &c. Vol. i. p. 183.

and how much he was at a loss to comprehend its meaning; the divine teacher replies by a repetition of his assertion, attended, however, by considerable explanation. “ Verily, “ verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and “ of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. “ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which “ is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said “ unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth “ where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but “ canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: “ so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”

Here occurs the only mention of water. It has been sufficiently considered, and we will not again dwell upon it. But here also the author of the change intended is repeatedly declared: “ the Spirit,” the Holy Spirit of God. The ground of its necessity is shewn: “ that which “ is born of the flesh is flesh”—carnal and corrupt.* The design of it is pointed out, which is to correct and remedy the corruption of human nature: “ that which is born of “ the Spirit is spirit”—partakes of the nature of its author, and is spiritual, holy, and divine. Can this be said of every one that is ‘ baptized? ’—In the manner of its production, and in its various circumstances, this “ new birth,” like “ the wind,” is ‘ out of the reach of our rules and calculations: ’ but, like the same powerful agent, in its effects it is perceptible to all observers.—In what follows, our Lord intimates, that it was what “ a master of Israel ” might have been expected to be well acquainted with. Compared with the mysteries of his person and his redemption, (of which he proceeded to speak,) it was an “ earthly “ thing,” and was continually taking place among men; it was abundantly taught in the scriptures already in existence; it was as much represented by circumcision under

* See Rom. viii. 5—9. Gal. v. 19—21.

the Old Testament, as it is by baptism under the New;* and the necessity of it might be evinced from principles of reason, only by comparing together the nature of fallen man, and the nature of “the kingdom of God.”

All this perfectly agrees with the ideas of regeneration above explained: but how it can be applied to baptism, or to any thing which constantly accompanies baptism, I have yet to learn.

We proceed to Dr. M.’s other scriptural authorities.

His notice of Mark xvi. 15, 16, is thus connected. ‘It is the doctrine of the holy scriptures, that we are by baptism made heirs of salvation through Christ; and it is the declaration of our Saviour, that we cannot enter into the kingdom of God, which is equivalent to the expression that we cannot become heirs of salvation, except we be born anew of water and of the Spirit. If then we cannot become heirs of salvation, except we be born of water and of the Spirit, and if we be made heirs of salvation by baptism, I see not how we are to evade the consequence, that the outward washing of baptism is attended by the sanctification of the Spirit, and that we are born of water and of the Spirit, when we are baptized. Thus when our Saviour, on giving his commission to the apostles *to go, teach all nations, baptizing them*, accompanied it with the promise, that *he that believed and was baptized should be saved*, it must clearly be understood, that the communication of the Holy Spirit and spiritual regeneration were to attend on baptism, which is here expressly represented as the means of salvation.’†

The last clause in this paragraph may serve as a clew to the whole. Our Saviour has said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not

* See close of c. iii. below.

† P. 29, 30.

“ shall be damned.” By a remarkable, and evidently a designed, omission in the second member,* he not only avoids making baptism essential to salvation, but shews his intention in this, as in all other places, to lay the main stress upon believing. Baptism, as an appointed means of grace, and the prescribed method of professing our faith, must not be omitted : it is ‘ of great necessity where it may be ‘ had.’† But faith, true and lively faith, is the weighty and essential qualification, which whoso hath shall be saved, and whoso hath not shall be damned. Now how marvellous is it to see Dr. M., under these circumstances, and by means of this very text, turning all our attention to baptism ! He *totally drops* the latter clause, which is distinguished by the studied omission of baptism : and, in the former clause,—“ he that “ believeth and is baptized shall be saved,”—he finds nothing to remark but being baptized ! He takes no more notice of the “ faith,” without which (in subjects capable of faith,) baptism itself, as appears from this passage, shall avail nothing to salvation, than if it had never been mentioned ! His deduction, his only deduction from the text is, ‘ Baptism is here expressly represented as the means of salvation ! ’ On so sandy ground, rather we may say, on no ground at all, rests one of the fundamental propositions of this paragraph, and all the reasoning built upon it !

We may now see what authority Dr. M. has for asserting, ‘ It is the doctrine of the holy scriptures, that we are by ‘ baptism made heirs of salvation.’‡ And again, for ‘ *arguing for baptism being the vehicle of regeneration*, BE- ‘ CAUSE IT IS THE VEHICLE OF SALVATION.’§ And yet

* See Whitby.

† Liturgy.

‡ I do not forget the expression in our catechism, which may seem nearly equivalent to this. It shall be considered in its proper place. See c. viii.

§ P. 35.

again, for asserting, ‘that baptism was ordained by Christ himself, with a *promise of salvation annexed to its legitimate administration.*’* We now find, that all this is ‘expressly represented’ to be the case in the words, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned”—whether he be baptized or unbaptized! Christ promised salvation to faith and baptism: *ergo*, baptism, whether accompanied by faith or not, is ‘the vehicle of salvation,’ and ‘a promise of salvation is annexed to its legitimate administration!’†

Let us apply Dr. M.’s mode of treatment in another and not dissimilar case. In Romans x., St. Paul says, “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Now should we, on the ground of this text, pass unnoticed “the believing with the heart,” and insist only on “the confession of the mouth,” as the thing required “unto salvation;” every one would be ready to reprobate the absurdity and impiety of annexing salvation to a mere profession of the lips: but the absurdity would not be more glaring than that of overlooking faith, and noticing only baptism, in the passage of St. Mark: nay, it would be more excusable in the former instance than in the latter, both because the connection and dependence of the things specified is there less close, and because no such omission occurs in

* P. 51.

† Let it not be pretended, that by ‘legitimate administration’ Dr. M. meant administration to penitent, believing subjects. If such were his meaning, the controversy would be at an end: and the point would be conceded, that baptism might be administered, in due form and order, to thousands, and no spiritual regeneration conveyed. But it is perfectly evident, that throughout his work he uses the term ‘rightly’ or ‘legitimately administered,’ in the same sense as the church appears to do, to signify, administered in due form and order, and by an authorized person.

that passage as was noticed in the second clause of the text under consideration.

But Dr. M. may probably refer me to the passage of the epistle to Titus, which is immediately to come under consideration, as a proof that baptism ‘conveys salvation:’ “He saved us by the washing of regeneration.” But, allowing “the washing of regeneration” to be baptism, it would be as unwarrantable to stop at those words, and to omit “the renewing of the Holy Ghost,” which follows, as it is to pass by faith, and to notice only baptism in Mark xvi.; or as it would be to stop at the words “born of water,” in John iii. In either case we should rest in the outward sign, and neglect the inward grace.

Perhaps, again, he may adduce 1 Peter iii. 21: “The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth now save us.” And it may, indeed, appear extraordinary, that Dr. M., instead of omitting it altogether, should not have brought forward that passage in the very body of his argument. But, in fact, it is clogged with such an explanation, as must make it ill serve his cause, on any occasion. In the very same breath, and in language somewhat disparaging, as to the effect of baptism where not ‘rightly RECEIVED,’ the apostle adds, “not the putting away of the filth of the flesh,” by the mere outward observance of the rite, “but THE ANSWER OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE TOWARDS GOD.”* What can this “answer of a good conscience” mean, but sincerity in the professions made, in the repentance and faith avowed, in baptism? These are ‘the means’ of saving us, and not the mere sacrament of baptism, which, without these, the apostle considers as no more than “putting away the filth

* It is remarkable that the Bp. of Lincoln, in quoting this text, takes only the beginning and the end: “baptism doth now save us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:” entirely omitting the explanation, which occupies the middle between these two clauses!—*Refutation*, p. 34.

“ of the flesh ; ” a mere washing of the body, or, at best, only an ‘ external and relative sanctification.’

On Tit iii. 4—7., Dr. M., substituting, for “ the washing of regeneration ” “ the laver of regeneration,” observes, ‘ By comparing together the several parts of this passage, it is evident, that baptism is here represented as ‘ the mean through which, or the instrument by which, ‘ the Holy Spirit of God regenerates us ; and thereby ‘ makes us heirs of that eternal life, which the mercy of ‘ God our Saviour hath provided for those, whom he justifies and saves.’*’

We will allow that the expression “ washing of regeneration ” alludes to baptism ; but much in the same way as “ born of water ” does in John iii. And it may safely be conceded, that baptism is ‘ a means ’ of regeneration, without its at all following, that spiritual regeneration must always accompany baptism, and can never be conveyed by any other means.—The marked distinction, now attempted to be established, between “ the washing of regeneration,” and “ the renewing of the Holy Ghost,” in this passage, as if the one referred to what takes place at baptism only, and the other exclusively to subsequent improvement,† appears to be a novelty, resting on no sufficient foundation. The two things are connected together in the text, as closely as “ born of water and of the Spirit ” are in John iii. 5 : and there would seem no authority for thus separating them. If the former refer to baptism as ‘ the outward sign,’ the latter, I should conceive, expresses ‘ the inward and spiritual grace.’ The profoundly accurate Bishop Pearson seems to have had no idea of any such distinction of the clauses. ‘ The second part of the office ‘ of the Holy Ghost in the sanctification of man,’ he says, ‘ is the regeneration and renovation of him.’ And then,

* P. 31.

† See Tracts, p. 27, 28, 41, 42.

having quoted this text, he presently adds: 'If we live in the Spirit, QUICKENED BY HIS RENOVATION, we must also walk in the Spirit.' He applies the term *renovation*, taken from this very text, to the first 'quickenings,' or regeneration of men.* So likewise Bishop Bradford, in his discourse from this text, which is circulated by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge: The inquiry he says, 'will lead us to the understanding of the true notion of REGENERATION, both when it is applied to baptism, (as it frequently is,) and when it particularly denotes the RENEWING of the mind by the Divine Spirit.'†

On 1 Cor. vi. 11, "Washed, sanctified, justified," Dr. M., having remarked, that the 'washing of baptism, is mentioned as the instrument by which both the blessings' of sanctification and justification 'are conveyed,' adds: 'It is true, that in this passage there occurs no such expression as regeneration, or the being born again; but, as it was before argued, if a person must be born again, in order to be saved or justified, and if by baptism he is saved or justified, it then necessarily follows that by baptism he is born again.'‡

The premises and the conclusion here hang together by a very loose and illogical connection. 'In order to be saved or justified' a man must be born again.' Of course his being 'born again' must, in order of nature, at least, precede and make way for his 'being saved or justified.' But by baptism, it is here said, the latter blessing is conveyed: and hence it is inferred that by baptism also the antecedent blessing is conveyed! Let us illustrate

* On the Creed, Art. viii.

† Society's Edit. 1810, p. 11. See also extracts from Dr. Barrow and Bp. Beveridge in c. x., below. Also Appendix, Note VI.

‡ P. 31, 32.

this reasoning. In order to being elected a member of parliament, a man must possess a certain qualification: but by the suffrages of the voters he is elected a member of parliament: *ergo*, by the suffrages of the voters he possesses the qualification!—Such appears to be the logic of the passage; nor is its theology, I conceive, much better. But the remarks already made, in treating of Mark xvi., may suffice for the present occasion also.

From Col. ii. 12, 13, Dr. M. says, ‘the argument is more ‘direct.’ ‘What can be plainer or stronger to the point? ‘Dead in their sins, and buried in baptism, by baptism ‘also they were raised and quickened by God.’* The apostle’s words are, “risen with him BY THE FAITH of the operation of God.” But this Dr. M. quite overlooks, as he had before done the whole subject of faith, in Mark xvi. 15, 16. Suppose, then, baptism administered to an adult who had no true faith, would he be “raised and quickened” by it?—The real question between us, and it is needful frequently to re-state it, is this, Does baptism necessarily, or invariably, convey spiritual blessings, irrespectively of the state of mind, ‘the repentance and faith, ‘of the receiver?’

‘To the Romans,’ Dr. M. says, (referring to Rom. vi. 4, 11,) the apostle ‘employs the same figure, describing ‘baptism as a burial, wherein they were dead unto sin and ‘alive unto God: adding withal a particular, which confirms an opinion, presently to be insisted on, that no ‘other than baptismal regeneration is possible in this ‘world.’ What is ‘the particular’ which confirms so momentous a conclusion? It is, that Christ “died unto sin “ONCE” and ‘no more,’ and that we are “to reckon ourselves likewise,” ‘*in a like or in the same manner,*’ Dr.

M. says, "to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" 'Does not the language of the apostle,' he asks, 'warrant the argument, that we are born anew in baptism, in baptism exclusively?'"* I reply, *Does it warrant any such argument?* I beg the reader to pause, and judge of this for himself.—On the ground of Christ's having "once died unto sin," and ever after "living unto God," the apostle exhorts Christians "to reckon themselves in like manner dead unto sin, and alive unto God;" and therefore not to suffer "sin to reign in their mortal body, that they should obey it in the lusts thereof." No commentator, I apprehend, before Dr. M., ever imagined, that the point of comparison was, the ONENESS of Christ's death, and the ONENESS of the mystical death of Christians! Surely had this been the point of comparison, it should have been noticed in the application of the case to Christians. "Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be" ONCE "dead indeed unto sin," &c.—However, I have no wish to contend for a second death unto sin, where 'a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness' appear really and practically to have taken place. But 'the death unto sin' of many, who 'call themselves Christians,' has been merely *in profession*, and not in fact: † and accordingly the church very wisely considers it rather as matter of admonition, that 'we who are baptized *should* die from sin,' than of assumption, that we *are* dead to it. ‡

* P. 32, 33.

† See Bp. Bradford's Tract on baptismal and spiritual regeneration.

‡ 'Exhortation to the godfathers and godmothers,' at the close of the baptismal service.—I do not feel myself called upon to notice any of Dr. M.'s authorities, except the scriptures and the church. I may here however just observe, that he quotes St. Austin for the assertion, that there is 'no one who does not die unto sin in baptism.' P. 39. He gives us no reference for the passage: for aught, therefore, that appears, it may mean no more, than that every one does this *by profession*.

I subjoin a quotation on these two passages of the epistles to the Romans and the Colossians, which appears to me much to the purpose.

‘ Here three particulars are mentioned, in allusion to
 ‘ the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; to whom
 ‘ believers are, in a figurative sense, conformed. They
 ‘ become *dead to sin*, as he *died unto sin once*. They are
 ‘ *buried*, as he was buried: they arise from among *the dead*
 ‘ *in sin*, as he arose from the dead. It is evident, that
 ‘ ceasing from sin, and becoming incapable of *living any*
 ‘ *longer therein*; that entire separation from the former
 ‘ course of ungodliness, and from the pollutions of this
 ‘ evil world; and the beginning and progress of a new and
 ‘ holy life, from *newness of heart*; are signified by this
 ‘ death, burial, and resurrection. Of these things baptism
 ‘ is the outward sign; and, in adults, it is an open profes-
 ‘ sion of them. Whether any reference was intended to
 ‘ the outward administration by immersion, in the word
 ‘ *buried*, it is not needful here to determine. However
 ‘ that be decided, it is manifest, that neither outward bap-
 ‘ tism, nor any thing inseparably connected with it, can be
 ‘ exclusively meant; unless all, who are baptized with
 ‘ water, are so *dead to sin*, and so *buried* from it, as not to
 ‘ walk any longer therein.—New converts professed these
 ‘ things, at their baptism; and if, with the washing of
 ‘ water, there was also *the answer of a good conscience*
 ‘ *towards God*, they would *thenceforth walk in newness of*

‘ Baptism doth represent unto us our profession, which is,’ &c. &c. In this sense it is true. But he must be a hardy believer indeed in, what I must call, the *opus operatum*, who will maintain, that a wilful hypocrite, coming to baptism from secular motives, and returning from it to his former sins, does *actually* “die unto sin” in his baptism! Sure I am that our church holds no such doctrine. ‘ In such only as *worthily* receive ‘ the same have’ the sacraments ‘ a wholesome effect or operation.’
 Art. xxv

‘ life : but not otherwise. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed ; that henceforth we should not serve sin.—Even true Christians need exhorting to act consistently with their profession ; and much more, collective bodies ; so that the subsequent exhortations do not at all invalidate this conclusion, which is drawn by the apostle in the most decided language. When the apostle said, *As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ :—for ye are all one in Christ Jesus ; and if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise ;* did he mean that hypocrites, receiving outward baptism, became one with Christ, the children of believing Abraham, and heirs of the promised blessings ? or did he not rather intend to express the same, as when he said, *By one Spirit we are baptized into one body ?* The outward baptism admits men into the visible church : but the baptism of the Spirit alone constitutes them living members of the body of Christ in heaven.’ *

On the passage from Eph. v. 25—27, Dr. M. says, ‘ Sanctification and purity, unspotted and unblemished holiness, are here attributed to the church of Christ, as the effect of the washing of water. But what water could produce such an effect without the operation of the Spirit ? And what rite is performed by their joint operation, but the sacrament of baptism ? And by what appropriate scriptural term is the effect of their united influence to be denominated, but by that of regeneration ?’ †

Not to urge, that this ‘ unspotted and unblemished holiness’ seems rather to refer to the heavenly state, when the redemption of the church shall have attained its con-

* Scott’s Remarks, &c. vol. i. p. 206, 207.

† P. 33.

summation,* I observe, that the apostle appears here, in conformity with many other scriptures, to ascribe it rather to the instrumentality of “the word,” than to that of “water.” The sentence is, “That he might sanctify and “cleanse it with the washing of water BY THE WORD.” So we are exhorted in our Homily on the sacrament, ‘Wash ‘yourselves with *the living waters of God’s word.*’ Dr. M., however, entirely passes over the terms “BY THE WORD,” just as he had done FAITH in Mark xvi. and Coloss. ii.—But, in point of fact, is the whole visible church of Christ brought to a state of actual holiness, either by the washing of baptism, or by that and the ministration of the word united? If not, it will not follow from this text, that ‘the ‘sanctification of the Spirit’ always accompanies any outward means.

The subject of ‘the joint operation’ of water and the Spirit has been before considered. Dr. M. here asks, ‘By ‘what appropriate scriptural term is the effect of their united influence to be denominated, but by that of regeneration?’ Who would not imagine from this, that the term *regeneration* was of frequent occurrence in scripture, and that it was, with sufficient distinctness, appropriated to express this effect? Now the fact is, that the substantive itself occurs but twice in the whole New Testament: and, in one of those two instances, there seems sufficient reason to conclude, that it refers to a quite different subject. † And, with respect to the verbs of kindred import, we shall ere long see how rarely they appear to be used with any allusion to baptism. So little authority is there for speaking of “regeneration” as the ‘appropriate scriptural ‘term’ for ‘the effect of the united influence’ of water and the Spirit!

* Bp. Pearson on the Creed, Art. ix.

† See Matt. xix. 28. Tit. iii. 3. and Parkhurst on *παλιγγενεσία*: also quotation from Bp. Hopkins, close of c. vii. below.

‘ Similar questions,’ to those which he has pressed from the foregoing passage, Dr. M. says ‘ arise from ’ 1 Cor. xii. 13 : “ By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.”* His inference seems to be, (for it is not very clearly stated,) that every one who is baptized is a partaker of the Holy Spirit. Now, in the conclusion of this same verse, the apostle adds : “ and have all been made to drink into one “ Spirit.” In which words he is understood to allude to the sacramental cup, as he had before done to the baptismal water. † The same reasoning, therefore, which shews from the beginning of the verse, that every one in baptism partakes of the spiritual grace, would shew, from the conclusion of it, that every one does the same in the Lord’s supper, without respect to the state of mind in which he receives it : a doctrine in direct hostility to that of the church of England.—That we ‘ divest’ baptism ‘ of that which ‘ gives it its value,’ (as Dr. M. goes on to charge us with doing, ‡) by denying that it uniformly conveys spiritual regeneration, is just as true, as that Dr. M. divests the Lord’s supper of all that renders it valuable, when he declares, as I presume he does, that only ‘ the faithful,’ in that sacrament, receive ‘ the body and blood of Christ.’ §

The simple fact appears to be, that in this, as in innumerable other passages, the sacred writer addresses persons *according to their professions*. They were members of the visible “ body ” or church of Christ ; they were made such by baptism : and they professed to be true members of his spiritual church : || and supposing them to be what they pro-

* P. 33. † Locke, Doddridge, &c.

‡ P. 34. § Catechism, Communion Service, &c.

|| I intend no other distinction here, than what Hooker (B. iii.) and Pearson (on the Creed, Art. ix.) have laid down. ‘ The *visible* church of ‘ Christ on earth, is a sort of people who profess the name of Christ, ‘ and own his doctrine ; joining together in a holy society and communion of worship, where it can be enjoyed. The *invisible* church of ‘ Christ on earth, is a number of true believers, who have internal and

fessed themselves, then indeed they were “baptized into “that one body,” by the “one Spirit” which ‘governs ‘and sanctifies the whole,’ and they “did all drink into “that one Spirit.”

With respect to Acts ii. 38, and x. 47, 48, from which Dr. M. says ‘the same inference is to be drawn,’* we may observe, that no one doubts, that he who believes in Christ is to profess his faith in baptism: and that baptism is the appointed external ‘seal’† of “the remission of sins” to him who “repents and is baptized.” But does it follow, that every one who is baptized is regenerated and pardoned, whether he repents or not?—All the instances thus adduced are instances of adults receiving baptism, and must be discussed as such, without reference, at present, to the case of infants.

Finally, some observations of Dr. M.’s on ‘Ananias’s ‘admonition to Paul, after his miraculous conversion,’ to “arise and be baptized, and wash away his sins, calling on “the name of the Lord,”‡ have been before remarked upon. It may be sufficient here to observe, that, as Paul was already, by Dr. M.’s acknowledgment, ‘converted,’ ‘renewed in ‘heart,’ and ‘obedient,’§ he must also have been in a state of pardon and acceptance: unless a man can be penitent, believing, and obedient, and yet unforgiven.|| All, therefore, that he could want was to have his sins “washed “away,” according to Hooker’s language ‘in the eye of

‘invisible communion with Jesus Christ, by their faith and his Spirit. ‘The visible church is of a much larger extent than the invisible: for it ‘comprehends hypocrites, and too many ungodly persons,’ as well as holy characters, &c. Bp. Hopkins, vol. ii. p. 419.

* P. 34.

† Art. xxvii.

‡ Acts, xxii. 16. Tracts, p. 34, 35. Compare p. 43.

§ P. 43. Here, it seems, *renovation* preceded *regeneration*!

|| See Acts ii. 19: xiii. 39: John iii. 14—18, 36: and innumerable other places.

‘ the church ; ’ to receive the visible ‘ sign and seal ’ * of forgiveness ; together with that fuller assurance of the blessing, and more abundant communication of the grace of the Holy Spirit, which might be expected to accompany it. † But, supposing that the words bore any other sense, would it follow from the sins of the ‘ converted ’ and ‘ renewed ’ Paul being “ washed away ” in baptism, that the sins of an unconverted, unrenewed Jew, for instance, hypocritically receiving baptism, would also be washed away ? Who can believe this ? Yet such must be the case, if ‘ baptism rightly administered ’ must always convey spiritual grace.

Such then is the amount of Dr. M.’s direct evidence from scripture, by which it was to be ‘ incontrovertibly ’ proved, that baptism rightly administered always conveys regeneration, and ‘ that no other than baptismal regeneration is ‘ possible in this world.’ If ever Dr. M. should have an important cause to maintain, in any court accustomed to receive and appreciate evidence, I hope he will have somewhat of more weight to bring forward : otherwise I would venture to foretell the issue of his suit.

But besides his direct proofs from scripture, Dr. M. has a *negative argument*, of which he makes considerable use. Reasoning of this kind, which infers that a thing *is not*, merely because its existence is not declared ; or that *it is*, merely because it is not denied to be ; is always of a very suspicious character. It is well known how serviceable it has been found by infidels, who have chosen to construe the omission of a fact by one evangelist, into a denial of it

* ‘ The promises of forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the ‘ sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed ’ in baptism. Art. xxvii.

† Tracts, p. 43.

as recorded by another; the silence of Josephus, or some other ancient historian, into a refutation of scripture history. The argument, therefore, is to be viewed, *à priori*, with some distrust, though it may not always be fallacious. Let us, however, hear Dr. M.

‘ If ever (he says) the new birth be not conveyed by baptism rightly administered; or if when once regenerated, it be (I will not say necessary, but) possible for any one to be born again, doubtless there is scriptural authority to that purpose. Let the authority then be adduced.’—Of the new birth not being always conveyed by baptism, proof may, perhaps, be adduced hereafter: and, as to a person, ‘ once regenerated ’ being regenerated again, those, at least, who hold with Calvin the doctrine of final perseverance, will agree with Dr. M., that it cannot be; but that such a person evermore continues regenerate.* But to proceed: Dr. M. demands ‘ Let it be shewn from holy writ, that any person, to whom baptism was rightly administered, was not regenerated; let it be shewn, that any person, having been once baptized, is described under any circumstances whatever of repentance, reformation, renovation, or conversion, to have been again regenerated; let it be shewn, that the apostles, who are perpetually exhorting their Christian converts to changes such as these, do once exhort them to become regenerate; do once enforce the necessity of it; or even affirm, or at least insinuate, its possibility; and we may then perceive some reason for wavering in our belief.’†

Here the unfairness of the negative argument discovers itself. Perhaps it will appear, that some of the things demanded admit of being done. That others cannot be done, may be owing to mere omissions in the concise histories of scripture; and particularly to the very sparing use of the

* See also Tracts, p. 48.

† P. 40, 41.

terms “regenerate” and “born again,” in the sacred writings. From the above passage, as well as from what was before said of ‘the appropriate scriptural term,’ it might be imagined, that nothing was more common than to find the apostles, in addressing *unbaptized* persons, insisting upon regeneration, *totidem verbis*. But how far this is from being the case has been already, in some degree, shewn. So seldom does this language occur, on any occasion, that one of our assailants pronounced the passage in John iii. to be perfectly ‘unique,’ and unparalleled in scripture ! The sacred writers do, indeed, continually insist on what is equivalent to regeneration, according to our views of its nature ; but generally under other terms : while they say so little of baptism, as must constitute a much more remarkable omission, according to Dr. M.’s views, than any with which he has endeavoured to embarrass us.

But to confine ourselves, for the present, to the passage just quoted. It is not true, that the apostles ‘are perpetually exhorting their Christian converts to such changes as’ ‘conversion :’ the reason of which, and of much of that omission from which Dr. M. argues, is,* that they generally assume such persons to be both “converted,” and “walking in newness of life,” as well as baptized. And to the demand, ‘Let it be shewn, that the apostles do’ ‘once exhort them to become regenerate,’ it may be replied (the proper sort of reply to an argument of this kind,) Let it be shewn, where they exhorted them to become ‘regenerate,’ even before they were baptized.† They exhorted them, it is true, “to be baptized ;” but it would be begging the question at issue, to assume that this is the same thing with being regenerated.

* See c. ix. below.

† ‘The apostles never called on the unbaptized Jews or gentiles to *regenerate themselves* ; any more than on professed Christians, who ‘had acted contrary to their profession.’ Scott’s Remarks, &c. vol. i. p. 176, 177.

In a subsequent passage Dr. M. proceeds in a like strain. ‘Simon Magus, *who* (as Bishop Wilson says) *had received the washing of regeneration, and so was entitled to pardon upon his repentance*, was exhorted by the apostle to repent of his wickedness, and to pray God, if perhaps the thought of his heart might be forgiven : and all of us are instructed to pray, agreeably to apostolical language, that, *being regenerated and adopted for the children of God, we may be daily renewed by his Holy Spirit*. But where are we instructed to pray after baptism for regeneration?’* And where, (it may be answered,) in scripture at least, are we, in terms, instructed so to pray before baptism? ‘Where,’ Dr. M. proceeds, ‘where is it intimated that the (incestuous) Corinthian was born again subsequently to his fall?’ And where, I rejoin, is he spoken of as ‘born again’ at all? ‘Where,’ Dr. M. asks, ‘was Simon Magus admonished of the necessity of undergoing another new birth?’ And where, I ask in return, is it said that he had undergone ‘a new birth’ at all? or even that he had ever been admonished concerning a ‘new birth?’ ‘And where,’ Dr. M. adds, ‘is St. Paul described as regenerated, until Ananias baptized him and washed away his sins?’ And where, it may be asked again, is he so described at that time? But the fact is, baptism and regeneration are so

* P. 42. It seems that the same society, which now circulates Dr. M.’s tracts, could, till lately, have answered this question. In a tract intitled ‘Directions for a devout and decent behaviour in the public worship of God,’ very commonly prefixed to the Prayer Books issued by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, there is given an alphabetical table of the collects, reduced under proper heads. And as late as the year 1812 the following was one article :

‘REGENERATION. A *Prayer* for it. Collect for Christmas-day.’ Since that period, it would seem, the conductors of the Society’s affairs have become better informed, and have, in consequence, changed the term *regeneration* for *renovation*!—See Christian Observer, Sept. 1815, p. 586.

The question, however, may still be answered from several tracts now on the Society’s list, and from the Prayer Book. See Appendix, Note VII.

completely identified in Dr. M.'s mind, that he can nowhere read of a person's being baptized, but he seems to think that he also *actually reads* of his being regenerated.

We see, then, of how much force and value are these negative arguments, which (reversing a received maxim,) assume, that *silence is equivalent to denial* !

The case of Simon Magus deserves a little more distinct notice. It is said, indeed, that he "believed," and that, "when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and "wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were "done." But he soon shewed what was the worth of his faith, and what were the motives by which he was influenced. "When Simon saw, that through the laying on of the apostles' hands, the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them "money, saying, Give me this power also, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost." He seems to have conceived, that this was a new and more powerful way, and that it might consequently be made a more gainful way, than he had hitherto practised, of fascinating, or "bewitching the people," and establishing his character as "some great one." Peter therefore said unto him, with holy indignation, "Thy money perish with thee, "because thou hast thought that the gift of God might be "purchased with money ! Thou hast neither part nor lot "in this matter : for thy heart is not right in the sight of "God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray "God, if perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of "bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." Yet this is the man who is to be held forth as a regenerate character ! that is, as one who was a partaker of 'supernatural grace'—of 'a new 'principle of life and of action'—of 'the sanctification of the 'Spirit'—which 'makes us heirs of salvation,' 'and entitles 'us to eternal life !' We are to believe all this, and more—

over that he had not lost the blessing, so as that it should be 'necessary or even possible' for him to receive any further regeneration 'in this world;' though St. Peter pronounces him to have neither "part nor lot" in the gift of the Holy Spirit, but to be "in the gall of bitterness and "in the bond of iniquity!" We are to believe it all, because he had been baptized, and because, forsooth, he is not *positively recorded* to have been 'admonished of the necessity' of any further regeneration—a term which is never once used with respect to him!

I remember a controversy being carried on, in a periodical work, concerning this same Simon the Sorcerer, in which one of the parties undertook to prove, that he was a converted and good man, because St. Peter exhorted him to repent and pray. The pseudo-calvinist argued that he was, in a high sense of the word, 'converted,' because he was exhorted to *so much* as repentance and prayer: Dr. M. argues that he was, likewise in a high sense of the word, 'regenerate,' because he was exhorted to *no more* than repentance and prayer! I must say that I could as soon agree with the one, as with the other.

How much more rational, and surely more scriptural also, and more agreeable to the doctrines of our church, is it to believe, that in his case baptism, not being 'worthily received,' was attended with no 'wholesome effect or operation!'^{*} that, being UNACCOMPANIED WITH "THE ANSWER "OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE TOWARDS GOD," it was no more than, as St. Peter speaks, "the putting away of the filth "of the flesh,"[†] a mere washing of the body, or at most only a 'relative, external, and ecclesiastical sanctification.'[‡]

The case of Simon Magus, however, is one, which may furnish salutary admonition to many of those, whom Dr.

^{*} Art. xxv.

[†] 1 Pet. iii. 21.

[‡] Bp. Hopkins.

M. teaches to consider themselves as regenerate; and who might be disposed, on that ground, to draw more favourable conclusions concerning their state, than their habitual temper and conduct would warrant. If one, who is by baptism regenerate, may yet be “in the gall of bitterness” and the bond of iniquity,” and without “part or lot” in the gift of the Holy Spirit; it certainly behoves us to beware of placing too much dependence on our baptismal regeneration. And, again, were it always distinctly admitted, that so great a change may be necessary for us, notwithstanding our baptismal regeneration, as it would have required to set “the heart” of Simon Magus “right” in the sight of God; there need not be much controversy about the name by which that change should be called. It is however, I am satisfied, the change itself, and not merely the name, that is in dispute.

CHAPTER III.

The subject continued.—Another series of scriptural passages concerning regeneration—Circumcision, and the Jews under the Old Testament dispensation.

IN the preceding chapter, I have examined the scriptural authorities, which Dr. M. has adduced in support of his sentiments concerning the effect of baptism. In the present, I intend to bring forward a number of passages, which bear pretty directly upon the subject, but which he has either wholly passed over, or only just alluded to.

I observe, then, that he admits the terms, “begotten again,” “born of God,” “the sons of God,” to be equivalent to one another, and to regeneration.* He asks, indeed, how these terms could be applied ‘to large societies of believers,’ ‘unless their regeneration was the effect of an ordinance, of which all Christians in general partake?’ and if so, of what ordinance but of baptism? We shall see hereafter, I trust, that the application of these and similar terms to ‘large societies’ of Christians, admits of a much more satisfactory explication, than that which is here proposed. But for the present we are concerned only with the admission, that the expressions, “sons of God,” “begotten of God,” and “born of God,” mean, for substance, the same as regeneration.

Let us then examine the passages in which these terms occur, and see *whether they appear to refer to baptism.*

* P. 35 and 44.

No expression of the kind, I believe, occurs in the first three gospels. Among the beatitudes, indeed, we read, “Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the *children of God.*”* But I will not urge this.

John i. 11—13. may, therefore, be considered as the first place in which this language is used. “He came to his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were BORN, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” Here “receiving” Christ by “believing in his name,” and also the will and power of God, are mentioned in connection with being “born of God,” and “becoming the sons of God:” but not a word of baptism. To imagine even an allusion to it† is perfectly gratuitous. Indeed it has been argued with some force, that this studied exclusion of “the will of man” is totally inapplicable to the case of baptism, where the will of the minister, and of other parties concerned, must concur.‡

The next instance is Rom. viii. 14: “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” Whether this comports with the idea, that all baptized persons are “the sons of God,” every one must judge for himself. If to be “the sons of God” be the same as to be regenerate; and if none be the sons of God but they that are “led by the Spirit of God;” I fear this will prove, what Dr. M. demands to see proved, that some, or even *many* persons, ‘to whom baptism has been rightly administered, have not been regenerated.’§

Another passage is 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18: “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the

* See also Luke xx. 36.

† Tracts, p. 8.

‡ Scott’s Remarks, &c. vol. i. p. 193.

§ Tracts, p. 40.

“ Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive
 “ you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be MY
 “ SONS AND DAUGHTERS, saith the Lord Almighty.”
 What, again, do we find concerning baptism in this passage? I fear it must furnish similar inferences to the last.

Gal. iii. 26, 27 : “ Ye are all the CHILDREN OF GOD by
 “ faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been
 “ baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Here, indeed,
 baptism is mentioned. Yet, even here, it is to their “ faith,”
 rather than to their baptism, that their being “ the children
 “ of God ” is ascribed.

James i. 18 : “ Of his own will BEGAT he us with the
 “ word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his
 “ creatures.” Here “ the word of truth,” not baptism, is
 pointed out as the ‘ instrument of our regeneration : ’ as it
 is also of our sanctification in Ephesians v. 26, before
 noticed.

1 Pet. i. 3 : “ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord
 “ Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy
 “ hath BEGOTTEN US AGAIN to a lively hope, by the resur-
 “ rection of Jesus Christ from the dead,” &c.

Ibid. 23 : “ Being BORN AGAIN, not of corruptible seed,
 “ but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth
 “ and abideth for ever.” Here “ the mercy of God,” and
 “ the resurrection of Christ ” are noticed, and “ the word
 “ of God ” is again assigned as the ‘ instrument ’ of regeneration.
 Dr. M. alludes to these verses : * but not a hint do
 they contain concerning baptism, unless it is to be *taken for*
granted that “ born again ” means, of course, “ baptized.”

We now come to the epistles of St. John. And we may
 observe, that the same apostle, who, with such evident seriousness
 and impression, records our Lord’s discourse with Nico-

* Tracts, p. 35.

demus on being “born again,” himself employs similar language more frequently than all the other sacred writers taken together.

1 John ii. 29 : “If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is BORN OF HIM.” This is establishing a very different criterion of regeneration, than the simple fact of having been baptized. And does not the apostle intend it to hold negatively, as well as positively,—that whoever *doeth not* righteousness is *not* “born of God?” If so, this is another passage which will assuredly answer Dr. M.’s challenge, by proving from holy writ, that many ‘persons, to whom baptism has been ‘rightly administered, are not regenerate.’*—This is confirmed by the next passage.

1 John iii. 9, 10 : “Whosoever is BORN OF GOD doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him : and he cannot sin, because he is BORN OF GOD. In this the CHILDREN OF GOD are manifest and the children of the devil : whosoever doeth not righteousness is NOT OF GOD, neither he that loveth not his brother.” “NOT OF GOD :” that is evidently, from the connection, is not “a child of God,”—is not “born of God.”

I must except this passage from the number of those; which Dr. M. but slightly notices. He employs no less than three pages upon the former of the two verses.† As, however, his effort is to obviate any conclusion, which might be drawn from it to the prejudice of his sentiments, not to convert the passage into a confirmation of those sentiments, it is properly reserved for this place.

Dr. M.’s labours upon the passage evince nothing, in my judgment, but the impossibility of reconciling it with the notions, that all baptized persons are born of God, and

* Tracts, p. 40.

† Tracts, p. 44—47.

‘ that no other than baptismal regeneration is possible in this world.’

He first misstates the argument drawn from the passage. It is hence contended, he says, ‘ that, as baptismal regeneration does not secure a man from sin, another greater and better new birth must be added to supply the deficiency.’ And he then cursorily alludes to the doctrine of ‘ sinless perfection.’ Now, I apprehend, that not even those, who hold sinless perfection to be attainable in this life, (of whom I certainly am not one,) do understand the apostle here to speak of such perfection, and to declare that no one is born of God, who is not *thus* ‘ secured from sin.’ But I conceive that every one, who will allow the apostle to speak for himself, must admit, that he does affirm the “ being born of God ” effectually to secure a man from *living in sin* as others do,—from *practising sin*,—from “ not doing,” or *practising* “ righteousness.”* And this is all that our argument requires. If no man who is “ born of God ” can *live in wickedness*, then many who have been baptized are not even yet “ born of God.”

In the next place, in treating of this text, Dr. M. has recourse to a most sophistical argument, to evade its force. ‘ In a passage before us,’ he says, ‘ the apostle affirms, that *whosoever is born of God cannot sin*; and a few verses

* It is true, that, in the latter clause of ver. 9, the simple verb *ἀμαρτανειν* is used : but in the former part the expression is *ἀμαρτιαν ου ποιεει* *doth not do, or practise, sin* : and in ver. 10. this is illustrated by the contrast of *ποιων δικαιοσυνην, doing or practising righteousness*. So that the “ sinning,” or “ committing sin,” is sufficiently proved to refer to a man’s *habitual practice*—‘ the trade of his life,’ as one of the homilies terms it.—The expression *ποιειν ἀμαρτιαν* occurs also in John viii. 34 ; but still in the same sense of habitually practising sin. *Πας ὁ ποιων ἀμαρτιαν, δουλος εστι της ἀμαρτιας.*

‘ Those words in St. John, that a man born of God *doth not and cannot sin*, must be understood in a larger sense, of their not living in the practice of known sin ; of their not allowing themselves in that course of life, nor going on deliberately in it.’ Bp. Burnet, on Art. xvi.

‘ before he affirms, *Beloved, now are we the sons of God* ;
 ‘ so that connecting the two assertions together, he will
 ‘ be made to affirm, that all the persons to whom his epistle
 ‘ was addressed were incapable of sinning; a hazardous
 ‘ affirmation this, if it be considered, that the epistle was
 ‘ certainly addressed to large societies of Christians; ’ &c.
 Nothing, I conceive, can be more unfair than the whole of
 this passage. By the terms ‘ incapable of sinning,’ Dr.
 M. takes advantage of the idea of the apostle’s meaning
 ‘ sinless perfection,’ though he has just discarded that in-
 terpretation of the words. He assumes, that what is said
 in such general expressions as, “ Beloved, now are we the
 “ sons of God,” is to be applied to every individual of
 the society to which the epistle may be addressed: than
 which, as I hope to shew, no more fallacious principle can
 be assumed in the interpretation of scripture. And then,
 as the basis of his argument, he puts this general language,
 in which people are spoken of *according to their own profes-*
sions, and the writer’s *charitable hopes* concerning them, on
 a footing with the strict and universal affirmatives and ne-
 gatives * of the passage under consideration. By such
 reasoning, what is there which we might not prove?
 Will Dr. M. undertake to affirm, that such passages as
 iii. 20, “ Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye
 “ know all things,” were true of every individual of ‘ the
 ‘ large societies of Christians—dispersed throughout the
 ‘ greater and lesser Asia,’ to whom he supposes the epistle

* Ver. 9. “ WHOSOEVER is born of God doth not commit (practise)
 “ sin.” Ver. 10. “ WHOSOEVER doeth not (practiseth not) righteous-
 “ ness is NOT of God.”—Dr. M., in quoting, passes from the opening
 words of v. 9, “ Whosoever is born of God,” to the concluding ones,
 “ cannot sin.” It would have been more fair, perhaps, to take those
 which stand immediately connected with the former,—“ doth not commit
 “ (practise) sin,” as they suggest that interpretation of the others, in
 which we all agree.

to have been addressed? Will he undertake to say, that every one of them, having (according to him,) “that hope” of which the apostle wrote in iii. 1—3, “purified himself even as God is pure?” Upon these principles, from v. 20, “We are in him that is true,” compared with iii. 6, “Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not,” we might prove that all these persons lived without sin; the very conclusion which he so justly pronounces absurd.

Dr. M. next says, “The truth appears to be, that St. John intended to give a description of those persons who, having been regularly adopted for the sons of God by the appointed means, continued to act in a manner worthy of their adoption, by striving to profit by the grace of God, which would then effectually preserve them from the grosser sins.” St. John declares that he speaks of all, “whosoever are born of God:” Dr. M. says, that he ‘*intended*’ to describe ‘those, who, having been regularly adopted for the sons of God,*continued to act* in a manner worthy of their adoption.’ Whose word is to be taken, the reader will decide. But supposing Dr. M.’s interpretation to be admitted, how nugatory does it make the apostle’s solemn declaration? Let us put it in Dr. M.’s way, “Whosoever is born of God,” and ‘continues to act in a manner worthy of his adoption,’ “doth not commit (or practise) sin.” What is ‘acting in a manner worthy of our adoption,’ but abstaining from sin? Does not this interpretation, therefore, make the apostle’s words to amount to this, Whosoever is born of God, and continues to abstain from sin, does not practise sin?—Dr. M. afterwards adds, ‘under the same limitation, we may admit the position of an acute writer,* *that the views, dispositions, and conduct of real Christians invariably characterize the regenerate children of God in scripture:*’

* Mr. Overton.

—and ‘that other position’ also, ‘*that there is an infallible connection between regeneration and salvation*:—positions, which are true, precisely to the same extent as the assertion of the apostle, that *by baptism we are dead unto sin, and are freed from sin.*’ I know not where the apostle asserts, that ‘by baptism we are dead unto sin, and freed from sin.’ I suppose the allusion is to Rom. vi: but I find no such assertion there. The church, as it has already been remarked, says, ‘So SHOULD we who are baptized die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness.’ That all those who are baptized are BY PROFESSION dead to sin may be true, but that they are so in fact—nothing, I fear, is less true.

After what has been observed on the preceding passages, we may be very brief on those which remain.

1 John iv. 7, 8: “Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God: and every one that loveth is BORN OF GOD and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.” The apostle writes much in this epistle of that love, which true Christians bear to one another, for Christ’s sake. And of that he must doubtless be understood to speak in this place. He calls it “the love of the brethren:” and elsewhere mentions the possession of it as a decisive evidence of “having passed from DEATH UNTO LIFE.” *

1 John v. 1: “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is BORN OF GOD: and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.” From the other passages adduced, it must be evident that the faith here intended is the ‘true, lively, and Christian faith,’ which “worketh by love,” and produceth obedience. However, whether more or less be understood

* 1 John iii. 14

by this "believing that Jesus is the Christ," here is no allusion made to baptism.

Ibid. 4, 5: "Whatsoever is BORN OF GOD overcometh the world: and this is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God." All other men are held in bondage by the world, by the love of it, or the fear of it: but he that is "born of God" has received 'a new principle of life and of action,' which enables him "to overcome the world." Is this true of all baptized persons? If not, they are not all "born of God."

Ibid. 18: "We know that whosoever is BORN OF GOD sinneth not, but he that is BEGOTTEN OF GOD keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." 'The apostle is speaking concerning a *sin unto death*; and his words clearly mean, that no one, who has been *born of God*, or *begotten of God*, committeth this sin unto death. I might here, with a force of argument not easily answered, maintain the final perseverance of all who are *born of God*: for apostates are especially the persons marked out as guilty of this sin. But, waving this subject, I would only ask, Is there any kind or degree of sin, from which all baptized persons are secured? any, from which they all, uniformly and without exception, keep themselves? If this be answered in the negative, as I think it must; then, beyond all doubt, being *born of God* is something' by no means inseparably connected with baptism.*

'We may here observe how prominent the idea of all true Christians being *born of God* was in this apostle's mind; and that they *alone* were born of God.' 'He

* Scott's Remarks, &c. vol. i. p. 202, 203.

‘ never adduces any thing peculiar to Christianity, but it is
 ‘ associated with being born of God.’ ‘ Yet he does not
 ‘ expressly mention baptism, except as recording facts, in
 ‘ all his writings.’ *

‘ Every passage in the New Testament has now been
 ‘ considered, in which the term regeneration is used, or
 ‘ words of similar import: and in two only, is there even
 ‘ any direct allusion to baptism.’ † “ The will of God ”
 is assigned as the source; ‡ “ the word of God ” as the
 ordinary instrument; § and “ being led by the Spirit,” the
 “ love ” of God and man, “ overcoming the world,” and
 righteousness of life, as the necessary evidences || of rege-
 neration: but how little do we read concerning baptism in
 this connection !

And as being “ born of God ” is continually spoken of
 without any reference to baptism, so, on the other hand,
 it has been remarked, that, ‘ in no one instance, in which
 ‘ the baptizing of any persons is recorded in the New Tes-
 ‘ tament, is the least intimation given, that they were then
 ‘ regenerated. The two subjects are kept entirely separate,’
 with the exception of the allusions to the outward sign just
 specified.**

Indeed it seems impossible to turn from such works as
 Dr. M.’s to the New Testament, without feeling strongly
 the transition we have made. In the former, I had nearly
 said, baptism occupies the whole field of view. It is placed

* Scott’s Remarks, vol. i. p. 193.—See also Appendix, Note VIII.

† Ibid. p. 204. The two passages intended are John iii. and Tit. ii.
 In Rom. vi. and Col. ii. no such term occurs. If a third passage is to
 be added, it must be Gal. iii. 26, 27, above quoted.

‡ John i. 11, 12. James i. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 3.

§ James i. 18. 1 Pet. i. 23.

|| Rom. viii. 14. 1 John ii. 29. iii. 9, 10. iv. 7, 8. v. 18.

** Scott’s Remarks, vol. i. p. 210.

in the greatest possible prominence: almost every thing is ascribed to it: all blessings are connected with it. ‘Super-
 ‘ natural grace is thereby conferred:’ ‘it conveys regene-
 ‘ ration:’ ‘it is the vehicle of salvation:’ it ‘entitles us to
 ‘ eternal life:’ we ‘are born anew in baptism, and in bap-
 ‘ tism exclusively:’ ‘it infuses a new principle of life and
 ‘ of action:’ ‘sanctification and purity, unspotted and un-
 ‘ blemished holiness, are attributed to the church of Christ as
 ‘ the effect’ of it: Christ, it is declared, ‘ordained it with
 ‘ the promise of salvation annexed to its legitimate adminis-
 ‘ tration.’ In short, it would seem that we are thereby re-
 generated, adopted, justified, sanctified, if not also glo-
 rified—for to that the passage last alluded to refers.*
 But turn now to the New Testament. There we find, in-
 deed, baptism ‘expressly ordained by Christ himself,’ with
 the declaration, “He that *believeth* and is *baptized* shall be
 “ saved.” It is the appointed mode of professing faith in
 him: it is ‘a sign, a pledge, a means’ of important bless-
 ings. As such it is required to be observed, and it is sup-
 posed that Christians have not failed to observe it. But
 when the terms of salvation are to be propounded, how
 seldom, comparatively, do we hear of it! “To as many as
 “ received him, to them gave he power to become the sons
 “ of God, even to them that *believe* on his name:” “That
 “ whosoever *believeth* on him should not perish, but have
 “ everlasting life:” “He that heareth my word, and *be-*
 “ *lieveth* on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and
 “ shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from

* So also the Bishop of Lincoln: ‘Those who are baptized are im-
 ‘ mediately translated from the curse of Adam to the grace of Christ;
 ‘ the original guilt which they brought into the world is mystically
 ‘ washed away; and they receive forgiveness of the actual sins which
 ‘ they may themselves have committed; they become reconciled to God,
 ‘ partakers of the Holy Ghost, and heirs of eternal happiness,’ &c.
Refutation of Calvinism, p. 83.

“ death unto life :” He that *cometh* to me shall never hunger, and he that *believeth* on me shall never thirst :”
“ What shall I do to be saved ? *Believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved :” “ Through his name, whosoever *believeth* in him shall receive remission of sins :”
“ By him all that *believe* are justified from all things :”
“ That *repentance* and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem :” “ Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, *repentance* towards God, and *faith* towards our Lord Jesus Christ :” “ *Repent* and be *converted*, that your sins may be blotted out.”

For what purpose do I make these quotations ? To shew that baptism is unimportant, because it is not mentioned in them ? If such were my purpose, I might justly be charged with the same negative mode of reasoning, which, in the last chapter, I censured in Dr. M. But such is by no means the use which I make of these passages. I adduce them only to shew, in what terms the inspired writers *ordinarily* proclaim the salvation of the gospel to mankind. I do not infer that they omitted baptism, or neglected to insist upon baptism, because it is not here mentioned : yet I cannot but ask, Had baptism occupied as large a space in their view as in Dr. M.'s, had they attributed as extraordinary an efficacy to it, would it not have been much more prominent than it is in their addresses ?

In one place, indeed, St. Paul even speaks of “ baptizing ” as a secondary and inferior employment, compared with “ preaching the gospel.” “ I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius ; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name” “ For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.”* I cannot persuade myself, that such language

* 1 Cor. i. 14—17.

comports with the idea of baptism being so completely ‘the vehicle of regeneration and salvation,’ as Dr. M. esteems it.

Before we quit the ground of scripture, there is another argument which may well deserve consideration. The Jews, it is allowed, were as much the covenant people of God, during the continuance of the Mosaic dispensation, as Christians are now. They had their initiatory ordinance as well as we. It denoted, that, according to our Lord’s expression, “that which is born of the flesh is flesh;” and that this corrupt nature needs to be mortified and put away. It represented “the circumcision of the heart to love God.”* It was “the seal of the righteousness of faith.”† Was it not to them ‘the sacrament of regeneration,’ as much as baptism is to us?‡ It was appointed by the same authority; it stood in the same place; it signified the same thing; it sealed the same blessings. It was evidently ‘a sign,’ and ‘a pledge’ of ‘a spiritual grace;’ and to those who ‘received it rightly’ it would be, at least, ‘by virtue of the prayers’§ which would accompany it, ‘a means’ of grace. Its sacramental character, I apprehend, will not be questioned. Dr. M. says, by baptism ‘mankind at large were to be admitted into covenant with God, as the Jews had been by the rite of circumcision.’|| And subsequently he adopts the words of a venerable prelate, who says, ‘Our REGENERATION is wholly the act of the Spirit of Christ. But there must be something done on our parts in order to it; and something that is instituted and ordained by Christ himself, which in the Old Testament was circumcision, in the New, baptism.’** This is

* Deut. xxx. 6.

† Rom. iv. 11.

‡ See Col. ii. 11: where some commentators understand the apostle to call baptism “the circumcision of Christ.”

§ Art. xxvii.

|| P. 6. 7.

** P. 26.

admitting, I think, what I contend for, that to the Jews circumcision was the ‘sacrament of regeneration;’* and that circumcised Jews stood on the same footing by their circumcision, as we do by baptism. If, therefore, baptism, by ‘its sacramental character,’ necessarily or uniformly convey the ‘spiritual grace’ of regeneration to us, circumcision must, for the same reason, and in the same manner, have conveyed it to them.

It becomes, then, an inquiry bearing directly upon the question before us, In what light do the inspired prophets and apostles view their circumcised hearers? How do they address them with respect to ‘the inward and spiritual ‘grace’ of circumcision? Do they consider them as having, of course, received it, and as incapable of any other reception of it in this life?

I might at once adduce the passage which has already so much engaged our attention,—our Saviour’s discourse with Nicodemus. It was addressed to a man who had done that which was ‘to be done on his part,’ ‘under the Old Testament,’ ‘in order to regeneration;’† who had received the only sacrament of regeneration then in existence: ‡ yet it was mainly employed in inculcating upon characters, circumstanced as he was, the necessity of their being born again. “Marvel not that I say unto you, YE must be “born again.” Either, therefore, our Lord was enjoining on them a second regeneration, or he assumed, that many of them, notwithstanding their circumcision, were still unregenerate.

But not to urge this further, let us attend to some other specimens of scriptural addresses to circumcised persons.

Lev. xxvi. 41, 42: “If then their *uncircumcised hearts*

* ‘*And so was circumcision a sacrament, which,*’ &c. Hom. of Com. Prayer and Sacraments.—All our old writers assume this, and, indeed, I know not that any one now denies it.

† Quotation above made from Tracts, p. 26.

‡ Tracts, p. 7, 8.

“ be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of
 “ their iniquity; then will I remember my covenant,” &c.

Deut. x. 16: “ *Circumcise*, therefore, the foreskin of *your*
 “ heart, and be no more stiff-necked.”

Ibid. xxx. 6: “ The Lord thy God will *circumcise thine*
 “ heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God
 “ with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou
 “ mayest live.”

Jer. iv. 4: “ *Circumcise* yourselves to the Lord, and take
 “ away the foreskins of *your heart*, ye men of Judah, and
 “ inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest my fury come forth like
 “ fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the
 “ evil of your doings.”

Ibid. ix. 25, 26: “ Behold the days come, saith the
 “ Lord, that I will punish all them which are circumcised
 “ with the uncircumcised; Egypt, and Judah, and Edom,
 “ and the children of Ammon and Moab, and all that
 “ are in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness;
 “ for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house
 “ of Israel are *uncircumcised in the heart*.”

Acts vii. 51: “ Ye stiff-necked, and *uncircumcised in*
 “ *heart and ears*, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as
 “ your fathers did, so do ye.”

This collection of scriptural passages might easily be enlarged to almost any extent, by the induction of others which speak the same sentiments, only without the use of exactly the same figure. Such, for example, are those which enjoin, “ Make you a new heart, and a new spirit; for
 “ why will ye die, O house of Israel:” or which promise,
 “ I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the
 “ stoney heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart
 “ of flesh.”* That all this relates to ‘the inward and
 ‘ spiritual grace,’ of which they had already received the

* Ezek. xviii. 31. xi. 19.

‘outward and visible sign,’ is proved by those passages which represent the change of the heart “to love God,” as the thing denoted by circumcision: and that it is the same as regeneration, Dr. M. virtually admits, when he describes regeneration as ‘a new principle put into us,’ even ‘the Spirit of grace.’ This surely cannot differ much from “a new heart and a new spirit put within us.”

All these passages sufficiently show, with what good reason our Lord intimated, that “a teacher of Israel” ought to have learned the doctrine of regeneration, even from the Old Testament.

I add only a passage from St. Paul, which strongly supports the doctrine contended for, and distinctly explains the principle upon which all the texts just adduced proceed.—Rom. ii. 25—29: “For circumcision verily profiteth, if
“thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law,
“*thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.* Therefore, if the
“uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall
“not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision. And
“shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil
“the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision
“dost transgress the law? *For he is not a Jew which is one*
“*outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward*
“*in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one INWARDLY; and*
“*circumcision is THAT OF THE HEART, in the spirit, and*
“*not in the letter,* whose praise is not of men, but of God.”

This text most decisively proves, “that the circumci-
“sion of the heart” was the thing of essential consequence; and that it might, and alas! too often did, fail to accompany outward circumcision.—Now, if all, which this passage lays down, held good under the comparatively external dispensation of Judaism, how much more must it be true under the more spiritual dispensation of the gospel! God forbid that we should imagine ourselves, or teach others to imagine themselves, in any essential and highly

important sense of the word, *Christians*, while we are such only “outwardly!” God forbid that we should satisfy ourselves, or teach others to satisfy, and thus to deceive, themselves with a *baptism* which is only “outward in the “flesh;” or with any thing which necessarily accompanies outward baptism, and is common to ‘baptized infidels’ with baptized believers! and that we should rest in any thing short of the baptism “of the heart, in the spirit, “and not (merely) in the letter, whose praise is not of men, “but of God!”

Now, on all these scriptures last adduced, let me be permitted to ask, Is it not perfectly conceivable, that there might have arisen persons in the Jewish church, strongly impressed with the privileges which pertained to them as members of that church; entertaining high notions of the nature of a sacrament, and of ‘the spiritual grace which it ‘conveyed’ wherever it was ‘rightly administered;’ and to whom, consequently, all these passages of the prophets and apostles would be very offensive? to whom they would be as obnoxious, as inculcating the necessity of the new birth upon Christians can be to Dr. M., or to any other person who entertains his sentiments? And may it not easily be imagined, that such characters would be able to plead very plausibly against the notions of a despised ‘party,’ which insisted upon somewhat more distinguishing and more spiritual;—which maintained, in short, such doctrines as those of Rom. ii. 25—29, just quoted? They might have urged ‘the sacramental character,’ and the high things said in scripture of circumcision; and have pressed the charge of reducing it to a ‘mere beggarly element, a form without substance, a body without spirit, a ‘sign without signification:’ and no doubt strong prejudices would have existed in their favour, in the breasts of those, whom they encouraged to be ‘filled with all joy and

‘ peace in believing that they partook ’ of spiritual circumcision,—that blessing having been ‘ conferred by the ‘ sacrament of ’ circumcision which they had all received. But how our Lord, how his forerunner, and how his apostles would treat such *vain confidences* we are not left to conjecture: for what I have here only proposed as an hypothesis, did actually take place, and those who held the doctrine of St. Paul, as just cited, were charged with *vacating Jewish privileges and the benefit of circumcision*, as much as any of us can be with disparaging those, which are connected with baptism and admission into the Christian church. This appears from the very next words of the epistle: (iii. 1, 2, &c.) “ What advantage, then, hath the Jew? and “ what profit is there of circumcision?” The apostle answers, but in terms which would give as little satisfaction to his opponents, as ours can do to those who condemn us, “ Much every way: chiefly because that unto them were “ committed the oracles of God.”

CHAPTER IV.

*A consequence of the doctrine, that baptism is regeneration,
or the only medium of regeneration.*

HAVING thus considered the testimony of holy scripture upon the subject of regeneration, and its connection with baptism, we might at once proceed to examine the doctrine of the church upon the same subject: but a consequence, immediately resulting from Dr. M.'s sentiments, presents itself, which may challenge some previous notice; and which is of so awful import, as must necessarily induce us very strictly to scrutinize the grounds of his opinions, before we adopt them.

In the discourse with Nicodemus, we have heard our blessed Lord repeatedly and most solemnly declare, that, "except a man be born again—born of water and of the Spirit—he cannot see the kingdom of God." In these words, by Dr. M.'s own interpretation,* this 'new birth' or regeneration . . . is pronounced by our Saviour to be 'necessary to salvation.' Yet he maintains, that it can be conveyed only by baptism: 'that no other than baptismal regeneration is possible in this world.†' What, then, is the unavoidable consequence? Clearly, that baptism is absolutely 'necessary to salvation,' and that we 'cannot become heirs of salvation' without it.

In many places, indeed, Dr. M. would seem almost to recognise this consequence. 'By being born again,' he says, 'of which our Saviour speaks in such lofty language,

* P. 29, 35.

† P. 32.

‘ something is designed *absolutely necessary* to be attained
 ‘ by those, who would enter into the kingdom of God.’ *
 Yet he maintains that it is baptismal regeneration which is
 designed, and nothing else. ‘ In what other ceremony,’
 he asks, ‘ and at what other season,’ than at baptism
 ‘ shall we find that joint operation of water and of the
 ‘ Holy Spirit, of which Christ affirms we must be born.’ †
 —Again : ‘ For the purpose of regeneration we conceive
 ‘ this union of water, as the instrument, and of the Spirit,
 ‘ as the efficient principle, to be *absolutely necessary*.’ ‡

But though he thus seems, at times, almost explicitly to
 admit this consequence, of the absolute necessity of bap-
 tism to salvation, I do not charge him with holding it.
 Once indeed he qualifies his language upon the subject.
 His words are : ‘ We are justified, in contending, that for
 ‘ the express purpose of regeneration, not only is his (the
 ‘ Spirit’s) operation necessary, but that it must also (hu-
 ‘ manly speaking) be administered through the mediation
 ‘ of water.’ § But it is manifest, that, if our Lord in the
 passage referred to spoke of baptism, every such qualifica-
 tion is unauthorized and unwarrantable. *He* says no such
 thing, as that ‘ *humanly speaking*’ a man must be “ born
 “ of water and of the Spirit,” in order to salvation ; but,
 absolutely and unconditionally, that, except he be so, he
 “ cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” His language
 perfectly suits the ideas which we entertain upon the sub-
 ject. We hold the change of regeneration to be indispen-
 sable to salvation, in every child of fallen Adam. How
 Dr. M. will make it accord with his sentiments, it is for
 him to consider.

I have said, however, that I do not charge him with
 holding the consequence, which, I have shewn, must follow
 from the supposition, that, in John iii, our Lord is speak-

* P. 24.

† P. 25.

‡ P. 27.

§ P. 28.

ing of baptismal regeneration, and of that only. But I do adduce the whole of what has been quoted in this chapter, as displaying a somewhat rash and ill-considered way of writing, which appears to me to render Dr. M.'s Tracts eminently unsuitable to answer their design, of 'conveying correct notions' * on the subjects of which they treat.

I subjoin an extract from a work before referred to, which presses our present argument in a very forcible manner.

' Our Lord says to Nicodemus, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Except a man be born, &c. &c.* Whence I infer, without fear of refutation, that whatever is meant by being *born again*, no man can possibly, without being born again, either be a true Christian on earth, or inherit the kingdom of God in heaven: and consequently he must live and die in his sins, and finally perish. Now is his Lordship prepared to admit, in its full extent, this consequence *concerning baptism*? Will he exclude from the possibility of salvation the whole body of the quakers, and all those children of antipædobaptists, who die without receiving adult baptism; and all those, who are antipædobaptists in principle, yet never receive either infant or adult baptism? Do all these perish without hope? Will he maintain, that no misapprehension, and no outward situation, in which baptism could not be procured, will make any exception? Are all the children of Christians who die unbaptized, excluded from the kingdom of God?—not to speak of the children of Jews, and heathens, and Mahomedans, who die before the commission of actual sin, but die unbaptized. I am far from believing that his Lordship, and others, who hold that baptism is regeneration, are prepared to admit these consequences;

* Title-page.

‘ which would be more repugnant to all our ideas of the
‘ divine mercy, than any thing, that either the most zea-
‘ lous opposers of Calvinism have charged upon the
‘ system ; or the most rigd and wild enthusiast, who dis-
‘ graced the name of Calvinist, ever advanced on the
‘ subject.’ *

* Remarks on the Bishop of Lincoln’s Refutation of Calvinism,
vol. i. p. 173, 174.

CHAPTER V.

The doctrine of the Church.—Remarkable difference between the language of the Church and that of Dr. Mant—Analogy of the other Sacrament—Church Articles and Catechism—Dr. Mant's doctrine a revival of the opus operatum.

THE needless embarrassment in which the subject is left, by the want of a more distinct definition of what is meant by regeneration ; whether a change of dispositions, or only a change of state and relations ; * has been already complained of. In what follows, however, I shall be content to take Dr. M.'s account of its nature, that it is ' a supernatural grace conferred,' ' a new principle put into us,' ' the sanctification of the Spirit,' which makes us ' heirs of salvation.' And, I trust, it will be at all times kept in mind, that the great question between us is, Is this supernatural grace necessarily, or is it even constantly conferred, where baptism is rightly administered ?

Having discussed the argument from scripture, I proceed to inquire, Whether our church teaches us to answer this question in the affirmative.

In conducting his investigation of this point, or rather his proof that the church takes the affirmative side, Dr. M. commences with the addresses and prayers in the baptismal services. Without particularly objecting to his method, I shall prefer beginning with the Articles. It seems natural to expect, from these professed and studied exposi-

* Bp. Hopkins, above, c. i.

tions, the most exact information concerning the doctrines of the church: and by them also it would appear reasonable to interpret any thing, which might be thought doubtful, in her more popular compositions.*

And here we have, happily, no less than six excellent articles upon the subject of the sacraments, five of which bear upon the question. Strange however as it may appear, Dr. M., professing to omit no one passage ‘in the liturgy and articles,’ † which relates to the subject, has not so much as mentioned more than one of these articles; while he has endeavoured to press into his service three others, which appear to me nearly foreign to the purpose.

‘In three of the articles,’ he says, the doctrine in question ‘is incidentally alluded to in such a manner, as to shew that the church takes for granted the connection between baptism and the new birth. In the 9th it is laid down, that *the original infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated*; and by the context it appears, that by the regenerated are intended *they that believe and are baptized*.’ ‡

The article referred to is that ‘of original or birth-sin.’ The connection of those parts on which the observation is made may be seen from the following extract: ‘And this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated . . . And although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized, yet the apostle doth confess, that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin.’ That they who ‘believe and are baptized’ are regenerated, I have no sort of doubt. But how it appears *from this context*, that ‘by the regenerated are intended they that believe and are baptized,’ is not very clear. § And, if it were, I do not perceive how it

* See Appendix, Note IX.

† P. 20.

‡ P. 18.

§ It appears that in the Latin copy *renatis* is the word both for *re*

would make for Dr. M.'s purpose; unless, because 'they' 'that *believe* and are baptized' are regenerate, it follows, that all baptized persons are regenerate, *whether they believe or not!*—This is the third instance in which Dr. M. drops all notice of "faith," in passages where it is expressly mentioned, and where it fills a prominent situation. And faith must here mean, not a mere general assent to Christianity, but 'the true, lively, and Christian faith: '* for it cannot be asserted, that 'there is no condemnation' for those who believe with any other than a living and fruitful faith, even though they be 'baptized.'

'In the 15th' article, Dr. M. proceeds, 'Christians universally are designated by the appellation of those, *who are baptized and born again in Christ.*' †

In this short remark there is, I apprehend, a double error. The article is, 'Of Christ alone without sin.' The part referred to is, 'But all we the rest, although 'baptized, and born again in Christ, yet offend in many 'things.'—'All we the rest' surely means, not only 'Christians universally,' but all mankind except Christ. Consequently the following clauses do not affirm, that all these persons are both 'baptized, and born again in 'Christ,' but that *even those of them*, who are so, do yet in many things offend. The connection is exactly like that in the ninth article; 'the infection doth remain, *yea in 'them that are regenerated:*' 'ETIAM *in renatis.*' The Latin copy (which is original authority as well as the English, ‡) makes this more clear; '*Sed nos reliqui, ETIAM 'baptizati, et in Christo regenerati, in multis tamen offendimus omnes.*'

generated and baptized in this article. Dr. Laurence says, I 'will not 'allow this identity of expresion.' I never denied it: nor does it help Dr. Mant's assertion, which, as I have shewn, is unavailing, even if admitted to be correct.

* Homilies.

† P. 18.

‡ Burnet.

‘The 16th Article,’ Dr. M. adds, ‘speaks of the condition of *those, who fall into sin after baptism*; that is, according to an equivalent expression, after they have *received the Holy Ghost.*’*—Not to spend more time upon such passages, I content myself with begging that the reader will turn to the article, and judge for himself what proof it affords, that the expressions above quoted are used as equivalent. I find none. At all events, arguing from such short and uncertain hints, when ample, distinct, and decisive matter is before us, appears to be labour misapplied. Proceed we, therefore, to the articles which treat expressly of the sacraments.

Dr. M. quotes only the twenty-seventh. I must request the reader’s attention to the twenty-fifth, twenty-sixth, twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth, and twenty-ninth.

On comparing all these articles with the Tracts, we are at once struck with a very material difference in the language employed. The great thing upon which the articles dwell with respect to the sacraments, in order to their salutary effect, is the ‘RIGHT RECEIVING’ of them: the *only* thing on which Dr. M. insists is, baptism being ‘rightly administered.’ By this he evidently means, administered in due form, and by an authorized person: and accordingly he, in one instance, substitutes for the ‘*right* administration,’ the ‘*legitimate* administration:’—‘ordained,’ he says, ‘as it was by Christ himself, with a promise of salvation annexed to *its legitimate administration.*’† Of this *right* or *legitimate* administration he speaks continually, while he never mentions the *right reception*, I believe, but once; and then merely as the phrase happens to occur *in a quotation from the articles*!‡ Surely a difference of language, so essential, and so uniformly

* P. 18.

† P. 51.

‡ P. 19.

preserved, affords no slight presumption of a material difference in sentiment.

But not only does Dr. M. assert, 'that a promise of salvation is annexed to the legitimate administration' of baptism, and that all are 'regenerated' to whom it is 'rightly administered:' not only does he justly observe, that the catechumen 'is instructed, that baptism is a sacrament; and as such, of course consisting of an outward and visible sign, and of an inward and spiritual grace: '* but he evidently and, I might even say, avowedly takes it for granted, that the two cannot be separated; that where the former is 'rightly administered,' the latter must accompany it. To suppose the inward grace separated from the outward sign, he says, is 'to reduce' this sacrament 'to a mere beggarly element, a form without substance, a body without spirit, a sign without signification.' The supposition that such a separation may be made, he calls a 'doubting of the inward and spiritual grace of baptism,' the expression of which excites in him 'pain and surprise.' He demands to have 'the exception' to regeneration's 'taking place at baptism' pointed out. He repeatedly argues, that if, where rightly administered, baptism do not 'convey effectual regeneration,' it is '*no sacrament*;' and that 'to deny its regenerating influence is *to deny its sacramental character*.' †

Now if all this hold of baptism, by its very nature as a sacrament, it must, of course, equally hold good of the other sacrament of the Lord's supper. Let us then hear the articles of the church upon the subject.

And first concerning the Lord's supper.

Art. xxix. *Of the wicked which eat not the body of Christ in the use of the Lord's supper.*—'The wicked, and such as be void of a lively faith, although they do carnally and

* P. 15.

† P. 10, 11, 15, 16, 21, 28, 29, 36, 40, 51.

‘ visibly press with their teeth (as St. Augustine saith,)
 ‘ the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, yet in no
 ‘ wise are they partakers of Christ: but rather, to their
 ‘ condemnation, do eat and drink the sign or sacrament of
 ‘ so great a thing.’—Is this supposing that the inward and
 spiritual grace must constantly accompany the outward and
 visible sign in a sacrament?

Secondly, of the sacraments conjointly.

Art. xxv. *Of the sacraments.* ‘ In such only as WOR-
 ‘ THILY RECEIVE the same they have a wholesome effect or
 ‘ operation: but they that RECEIVE them UNWORTHILY
 ‘ purchase to themselves damnation, as St. Paul saith.’ *

Thirdly, of baptism in particular.

Art. xxvii. *Of baptism.* ‘ Baptism . . . is a sign of re-
 ‘ generation or new birth, whereby, as by an instrument,
 ‘ they that RECEIVE baptism RIGHTLY are grafted into the
 ‘ church,’ &c. &c.

Nor does the church leave us uninformed what she un-
 derstands by a RIGHT RECEIVING of the sacraments.

Art. xxvi. *Of the unworthiness of the ministers, which
 hinders not the effect of the sacrament.* ‘ Neither is the
 ‘ effect of Christ’s ordinance taken away by their wicked-
 ‘ ness, nor the grace of God’s gifts diminished from such
 ‘ as BY FAITH and rightly do receive the sacraments,’ &c.
 &c.

Art. xxviii. *Of the Lord’s supper.* ‘ To such as *rightly,*
 ‘ *worthily,* and WITH FAITH, receive the same, the bread
 ‘ which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ,’ &c.

Every one must remember similar sentiments and lan-
 guage in the communion service. ‘ As the benefit is great,
 ‘ if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive

* This article, indeed, declares sacraments to be ‘ *effectual* signs of
 ‘ grace:’ but to whom their efficacy extends, is sufficiently defined in
 the part of it quoted above.

‘ that holy sacrament ; (for *then* we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, are one with him, &c.) so is the danger great if we receive the same unworthily.’

And so also the catechism teaches us, that by ‘ the faithful ’ alone are ‘ the body and blood of Christ,’ or the spiritual blessings procured and represented by them, ‘ verily and indeed taken and received in the Lord’s supper : ’ and that ‘ repentance and faith ’ are required in those who come either to that sacrament, or to the sacrament of baptism.—With what shadow of reason, then, can Dr. M. pretend that the catechism countenances, and much more that it ‘ unequivocally asserts,’ his doctrine? The catechism as much asserts an inward and spiritual grace of the Lord’s supper as it does of baptism : it would be extraordinary if it did not. It declares the same qualifications (at least, in subjects capable of them,) to be requisite for one sacrament as the other ; and, with respect to the former, it evidently adopts that limitation of the spiritual grace, which the articles so explicitly lay down. It is confined to ‘ the faithful : ’* for ‘ the mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper is faith.’† Strange then, indeed, would it be to infer, that, according to the catechism, the inward grace of baptism must needs accompany the outward sign, merely because an inward grace of that sacrament is asserted ! Yet Dr. M. has little other ground than this for claiming the authority of the catechism in favour of his sentiments.‡

Let it be remembered that the point now in discussion is, whether ‘ the spiritual grace ’ in all cases accompanies ‘ the outward sign ’ in a sacrament. Whether to deny this is ‘ to deny the nature of a sacrament.’ If that be true of

* Catechism.

† Article xxviii.

‡ Whatever additional ground he may think that he has from the words, ‘ we are thereby made the children of grace,’ will be considered in c. viii.

one sacrament, it must be of both: and the passages which I have adduced are express and decisive of the judgment of the church on the question, with respect to both sacraments. There is no possibility of evading it.—Here then, I do not scruple to say, that Dr. M., at the very moment when he is taking upon him to judge and condemn his brethren, is himself in the same condemnation which he pronounces upon them:—to use his own words, he is ‘in IRRECONCILABLE OPPOSITION to the UNEQUIVOCAL and NUMEROUS ‘declarations’ of the church of England, on this most ‘important article.’*

In a subsequent part of his tracts, Dr. M. himself appeals to the other sacrament, and argues from it in a manner which, after what we have seen, may be thought not a little extraordinary. ‘If the spiritual part of baptism be ‘denied, why should the spiritual part of the communion ‘be allowed? If water be not really the laver of regeneration, why should bread and wine be spiritually the body ‘and blood of Christ, and convey strength and refreshment to the soul?’ Do they do so, except to the penitent and believing soul? The articles have already answered the question. And was it ever denied that baptism conveys spiritual grace, with a similar restriction?—He proceeds, ‘Surely it is not too much to affirm, that the ‘stripping of one of God’s ordinances of that, which constitutes it essential value, has a natural tendency to bring ‘the efficacy of the others into question, and to diminish at ‘least, if not to annihilate, a man’s respect for them as means ‘of spiritual grace.’† *We strip baptism of ‘that which ‘constitutes its essential value,’ no more, nor any otherwise, than Dr. M. so strips the Lord’s supper, every time he recites the exhortation in the communion service.*

* Tracts, p. 23.

† P. 51.

But, in fact, this question of the necessary, or unfailing efficacy of the sacraments is no new one: and Dr. M.'s sentiments upon it are little else than a revival of the popish doctrine of the *opus operatum*, or that the benefit of the sacraments is conveyed by the mere reception of them, independently of the state of mind of the person receiving them. And of this doctrine let us hear the opinion of our church, and of the reformers generally, as summed up by Bishop Burnet. 'This,' he says, 'we reckon a doctrine that is not only without all foundation in scripture, but that tends to destroy all religion, and to make men live on securely in sin, trusting to this, that the sacraments may be given them when they die. The conditions of the new covenant are repentance, faith, and obedience; and we look on this as the corrupting the vitals of this religion, when any such means are proposed, by which the main design of the gospel is quite overthrown. . . We look on all sacramental actions as acceptable to God *only with regard to the temper, and the inward acts of the person to whom they are applied*; and cannot consider them as medicines or charms, which work by virtue of their own,* whether the person to whom they are applied co-operates with them or not.' 'Thus we reject, not without great zeal against the fatal effects of this error, all that is said of the *opus operatum*, the very doing of the sacrament: we think it looks liker the incantations of heathenism, than the purity and simplicity of the Christian religion.'†

Again, in the following passages, his language applies, if possible, still more directly and unequivocally to the case before us. 'The second part of this period' (Art. xxv.)

* See Appendix, Note X.

† Burnet on Art. xxv. p. 330, 331, 332, 8vo. I do not adopt every mode of expression which occurs in these extracts; but the general argument is excellent.

‘ is, that the effect of the sacraments *comes only upon the worthy receiving of them*. . . The pretending that sacraments have their effect any other way is the bringing in the doctrine and practice of charms into the Christian religion: and it tends to dissolve all obligations to piety and devotion, to a holiness of life, or a purity of temper:’ * &c.

‘ The august words, that were dictated by our Lord himself,’ as the form to be used in baptism, ‘ shew us that there is somewhat in it that is internal, which comes from God; that it is an admitting men into somewhat that depends only on God, and for the giving of which the authority can only be derived from him. But after all, this is not to be believed to be of the nature of a charm, *as if the very act of baptism carried always with it an inward regeneration*. Here, we must confess, that very early some doctrines arose upon baptism, that we cannot be determined by. The words of our Saviour to Nicodemus were expounded so, as to import the absolute necessity of baptism in order to salvation.’—‘ Another opinion, that arose out of the former, was *the mixing of the outward and the inward effects of baptism*’. . . St. Peter has stated the subject ‘ so fully, that if his words are well considered, they will clear the whole matter. He, after he had set forth the miserable state in which mankind was, under the figure of the deluge, in which an ark was prepared for Noah and his family, says upon that, *The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us*. Upon which he makes a short digression to explain the nature of baptism, *not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer (or the demand and interrogation) of a good conscience towards God; by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is gone into heaven*. The meaning of all which is, that

‘ Christ having risen again, and having then had all power
‘ in heaven and in earth given to him, he had put that
‘ virtue in baptism, that by it we are *saved*, as in an ark,
‘ from that miserable state in which the world lies, and in
‘ which it must perish. But then he explains the way how
‘ it saves us; that it is not as a physical action, as it washes
‘ away *the filthiness of the flesh* or of the body, like the
‘ notion that the gentiles might have of their februations;
‘ or, which is more natural, considering to whom he writes,
‘ like the opinions that the Jews had of their cleansings
‘ after their legal impurities, from which their washings and
‘ bathings did absolutely free them. The salvation that we
‘ Christians have by baptism is effected by that federation
‘ into which we enter, when, upon the demands that are
‘ made of our renouncing the devil, the world, and the
‘ flesh, and of our believing in Christ, and our repentance
‘ towards God, we make such *answers from a good con-*
‘ *science*, as agree with the end and design of baptism; then,
‘ by our thus coming into covenant with God, we are saved
‘ in baptism. So that the salvation by baptism is given by
‘ reason of the federal compact that is made in it. Now
‘ this being made outwardly, according to the rules that
‘ are prescribed, that must make the baptism *good among*
‘ *men*, as to all the outward and visible effects of it: but
‘ since it is *the answer of a good conscience* only that saves,
‘ then an answer from a bad conscience, from a hypocri-
‘ tical person, who does not inwardly think, or purpose,
‘ according to what he professes outwardly, *cannot save, but*
‘ *does, on the contrary, aggravate his damnation*. Therefore
‘ our article puts the efficacy of baptism, in order to the
‘ forgiveness of our sins, and to our adoption and salvation,
‘ upon the *virtue of prayer to God*; that is, upon those
‘ vows and other acts of devotion that accompany it:
‘ so that *when the seriousness of the mind accompanies the*
‘ *regularity of the action*, then both the outward and inward

‘ *effects of baptism are attained by it* : and we are not only
‘ *baptized into one body*, but are also *saved by baptism*.—So
‘ that upon the whole matter, baptism is a federal admission
‘ into Christianity, in which, on God’s part, all the bless-
‘ ings of the gospel are made over to the baptized : and on
‘ the other hand, the person baptized takes on him, by a
‘ solemn profession and vow, to observe and adhere to the
‘ whole Christian religion. So it is a very natural dis-
‘ tinction to say, *that the outward effects of baptism follow*
‘ *it as outwardly performed* : but *that the inward effects of it*
‘ *follow upon the inward acts*. But this difference is still
‘ to be observed between inward acts and outward actions,
‘ that when the outward action is rightly performed, the
‘ church must reckon the baptism good, and never renew
‘ it ; but if one has been wanting in the inward acts, those
‘ may be afterwards renewed, and that want may be made
‘ up by repentance.’ *

Such are the doctrines of an exposition of the articles, written by a right reverend prelate, and recommended, I believe, for more than a hundred years past, by all our bishops, to the study of every candidate for orders. Yet a society, which boasts the patronage of the whole bench of bishops, now circulates Dr. Mant’s tracts, in order ‘ to convey correct notions’† upon the same subject !

But it may be said, that all which has been adduced relates to the reception of the sacraments by adults, or persons capable of repentance, faith, and other qualifications of mind : whereas Dr. M. confines, or nearly confines, his attention to the baptism of infants. This, however, is not strictly true. That the church had not *forgotten* the case of infants, when she thus delivered the doctrine of the sacraments, is made evident by the conclusion of the twenty-

* Burnet on Art. xxvii. p. 378—380.

† Title-page.

seventh article : ‘ The baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ.’ But, even if it had not been so, still my quotations demonstrate, that, in the opinion of the church, there exists no necessary or constant connection between the outward sign and the inward grace of a sacrament; that the former may be ‘ rightly administered,’ and the latter not communicated; nay, that this is always the case where the sacrament, whether of baptism or of the Lord’s supper, is not ‘ rightly received.’ And the occurrence, or even the possibility, of such a fact, in any one instance, overthrows the hypothesis, that the inward and spiritual grace of baptism must uniformly accompany the due administration of the outward and visible sign.

But that Dr. M. should have so much confined his attention to the case of infant recipients of baptism, I take to be a material fault of his work.* Had he allowed himself duly to consider the case of adults receiving a sacrament, and what the church has laid down, concerning the qualifications requisite for receiving it with spiritual benefit, I think it impossible that he should have continued in some of what I must call his present errors. Perfectly agreeing with what I have just quoted from our twenty-seventh article, that ‘ the baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ;’ I still must think, that with the case of infants, and *in transferring, to subjects ‘incapable of repentance and faith,’ language which was originally applied only to persons SUPPOSED to possess both, much of the confusion which has prevailed, was introduced into the subject.*

Let me then again put to Dr. M. the case of an adult, having baptism ‘ rightly administered’ to him, but yet, contrary to all his professions, destitute of “ repentance to-

* See Appendix, Note XI.

“wards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ:” does such a person, in receiving baptism, receive the inward and spiritual grace, or does he not? If he does, what becomes of all the doctrine of our articles concerning the sacraments bringing condemnation, instead of ‘a whole-some effect and operation,’ to those who receive them not ‘rightly, worthily, and with faith?’ If he does not, what shall we say to Dr. M.’s principle of ‘the sacramental character’ being ‘denied,’ by supposing the outward sign rightly administered, and the inward grace not communicated?

It may be said again, ‘The case of an infant, incapable of personal repentance and faith,* is not to be put upon a footing with that of an adult, positively *impenitent* and *unbelieving*, and therefore a hypocrite in his baptismal professions.’ Certainly it is not: but neither is it to be considered as *necessarily* on an equality with the case of a real penitent, and true believer in Christ, professing his faith in baptism. Such an one unquestionably enjoys the inward and spiritual grace, as well as the outward and visible sign. But on what ground (after Dr. M.’s principle respecting ‘the sacramental character’ has been discarded,) it is concluded, that these two distinct things must *necessarily*, or *in all cases* go together, where infants are concerned, I am at a loss to conceive.

The language of our church upon this subject will very soon be considered. In the mean time I ask, Does it seem reasonable to suppose, that a blessing *necessarily* or *always* accompanies the administration of a sacrament, to those who ‘by reason of their tender age cannot’ exercise repentance and faith, which *by no means necessarily* or *always* accompanies it, to grown persons who are capable of both those graces?

* Catechism.

CHAPTER VI.

Church Services.—Office for baptism of adults.—Principle on which the church proceeds, in speaking of all whom she has admitted to baptism as regenerate.

IN the preceding chapter, I trust I have demonstrated, that the articles of the church afford no countenance to Dr. M.'s doctrine concerning baptism; and at the same time succeeded in removing one main support of his system, namely the assumption, that to suppose the inward grace of baptism in any case withheld, where the outward sign is 'rightly administered,' is 'to deny its sacramental character;' 'to reduce it to a mere beggarly element, a form without substance, a body without spirit, a sign without signification.' Like every other religious rite, baptism may be made nearly all this: * but then who 'make' it such? Not those who caution men against resting in the outward form, without enjoying the spiritual blessing, but those who 'receive it unworthily.'

But still it may be asked, Supposing Dr M. to have been incautious or erroneous in this principle, yet is he not borne out by our public services, in asserting that baptism 'conveys regeneration' to every one to whom it is rightly administered?

This question I proceed to consider; only premising, that it would seem very unlikely, that a church, which, in

* Not indeed 'a sign without signification;' the expression is incorrect:—but a sign *separated from* the thing signified.

her doctrinal articles, so carefully lays it down, that ‘in such only as worthily receive the same the sacraments have a wholesome effect or operation;’ should, in her liturgy, have assumed, that the outward rite and the spiritual grace inseparably accompany each other. Dr. M., however, is so sure that the services of the church are on his side, that he says they ‘need no comment:’ ‘language cannot be plainer.’ One thing, however, I hope he may by this time feel, that, *according to his view of those services*, they certainly do want a comment to reconcile them with the articles. And this is some presumption, that the view which he has taken of them is not quite correct.*

I shall begin with ‘the ministratiōn of baptism to such as are of riper years, and able to answer for themselves;’† in order that we may consider the subject disencumbered of any particular questions, which the case of infants might introduce into it. That case shall afterwards receive separate consideration.‡

Before we proceed to the baptism of such persons, the rubric admonishes us, that ‘due care is to be taken for their examination, whether they be sufficiently instructed in the principles of the Christian religion; and that they may be exhorted to prepare themselves with prayers and fasting for the receiving of this holy sacrament.’ This is by no means immaterial to our inquiry.

The persons being, as far as human judgment can go, ‘found fit,’ and the time for the administration being

* See Appendix, Note XII.

† I am aware that this office is of later date than the rest, having been added at the last review of the liturgy, after the restoration. But I suppose no one will pretend that it has not equal authority. Besides, the same system evidently pervades all the offices, and all must be interpreted in the same manner.

‡ See Appendix, Note XIII.

come, the service opens with an address, which differs only by the addition of the words in brackets from that, which Dr. M. has quoted from the ministration of public baptism to infants: ‘Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are
 ‘conceived and born in sin, [and that which is born of the
 ‘flesh is flesh, and they that are in the flesh cannot please
 ‘God, but live in sin, committing many actual trans-
 ‘gressions;] and that our Saviour Christ saith, none can
 ‘enter into the kingdom of God, except he be regenerate
 ‘and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost; I
 ‘beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our
 ‘Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous goodness he
 ‘will grant to these persons that which by nature they
 ‘cannot have; that they may be baptized with water and
 ‘the Holy Ghost; and received into Christ’s holy church,
 ‘and be made lively members of the same.’

It would seem not unnatural to ask, Are we not furnished, by the words in brackets, with a criterion by which to judge whether a man is ‘in the flesh,’ (that is, I suppose it will be allowed, ‘unregenerate,’*) or the contrary? They who ‘live in sin,’† are, it would seem, by the testimony of our church, as well as by the decision of St. John, ‘in
 ‘the flesh;’ and therefore not ‘born of God.’‡ But I forbear to press this.

Dr. M.’s remarks on this address are as follow: It ‘is
 ‘designed to draw the attention of the hearers to the
 ‘purpose, for which baptism is administered. It consists
 ‘of two parts: an admonition to the people to pray, and
 ‘a reason for the admonition: what they are to pray for
 ‘partly is, that the child [or the persons] *may be baptized*

* See John iii. 6.

† See Rom. vi. 2.

‡ 1 John iii. 9. See above, p. 49.

‘ *with water and the Holy Ghost ; the reason for their being called on so to pray, is, forasmuch as Christ saith, none can enter into the kingdom of God except he be regenerate and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost.* Putting these passages together, what else is the prayer that the child [person] may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, than a prayer that by baptism he may be born anew?’ *

If the words *by baptism* here mean *through the medium of baptism*, I have no wish to dispute this inference, taken with a limitation, which it may hereafter be seen that it requires.† I readily admit that the church considers baptism as being, by the very nature of a sacrament, ‘ a means and pledge,’ as well as ‘ a sign,’ of ‘ a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness.’—But does no further inference suggest itself to Dr. M.’s mind from this address? In the exhortation to pray, that the persons about to receive baptism ‘ *may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost,*’ does he not again read the doctrine of the articles, that the outward rite may be duly administered, and the inward grace not be received? The object of the petition cannot be the baptism with water: *that* the priest has power to administer, and is about to administer: it must be, that baptism with the Holy Ghost may accompany it. It is possible, therefore, that it should not accompany it: at least it may be so, if these prayers are not made devoutly and in faith.

The prayers, which immediately follow, form the best comment on the address, and the best confirmation of the argument which I have drawn from it. In them the spiritual grace is the sole object of petition. We beseech God ‘ to wash and sanctify these his servants with the Holy Ghost, that they, being delivered from his wrath,

* P. 11, 12.

† Chap. xi. and conclusion of c. xii.

‘ may be received into the ark of Christ’s church:’ &c. &c. And again, ‘ We call upon him for these persons, that they, ‘ coming to his holy baptism, may receive remission of ‘ their sins by spiritual regeneration.’ This passage Dr. M. says, ‘ needs no comment: it will only be recollected ‘ that the question is, What does the church of England ‘ understand by our Saviour’s expression of being born of ‘ water and of the Spirit.’ This is, by no means, the only or the principal question between us. However, I perceive in this passage no further answer to that question, than that the church understands our Saviour to speak of a spiritual change, of which baptism is a ‘ sign,’ and may be ‘ a ‘ means:’ but which may fail of accompanying baptism; else why so earnestly pray, that these persons, ‘ coming to ‘ baptism,’ *may* have it?

Similar remarks may be made upon other prayers, which Dr. M. cites, though he pronounces any further comment upon them to be unnecessary. For example; ‘ Give thy ‘ Holy Spirit to these persons, that they *may be born again*, ‘ and be made heirs of everlasting salvation.’ Does not this imply, that they might be baptized, and yet not be “ born again.” I profess, that to me the prayers seem to suggest conclusions, directly *opposite* to those which Dr. M. would make from them. He would infer, that baptism either ‘ is,’ or ‘ conveys’ regeneration: these prayers imply, (what the articles have expressly taught,) that it is very possible for regeneration not even ‘ to accompany’ baptism.

Again, I quote, because Dr. M. has quoted, the following: ‘ Sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of ‘ sin; and grant that the persons now to be baptized ‘ therein may receive the fulness of thy grace, and ever ‘ remain in the number of thy faithful and elect children.’ Is it not implied here, that it is just as possible for them

to fail of receiving ‘the fulness of God’s grace’ now, at their baptism, as to fail of ‘remaining ever in the number of his faithful and elect children’ afterwards? *

But we have already passed the gospel appointed for the occasion. We return to it. In Dr. M.’s words, ‘the passage selected is the conversation, wherein Christ asserts to Nicodemus the necessity of the new birth:’ and, as our author also observes, it is made the foundation of an address commencing as follows: ‘Beloved, ye hear in this gospel the express words of our Saviour Christ, that, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Whereby we may perceive the great necessity of this sacrament, where it may be had.’

On these words Dr. M. thus triumphantly remarks: ‘It must be enough barely to quote this passage: it would be an insult upon any man’s understanding, to attempt to make it clearer; and it would be superfluous to add more from the same office. If a bare statement of this fact does not convince a man, nothing, I am persuaded, can convince him, that it is by baptism, in the judgment of the church of England, that a man is born of water and of the Spirit.’ †

Here is great confidence, great exultation, but I, for one, must acknowledge my obligation to Dr. M. for the hint he has given at the close, without which I might not have discovered what was the occasion of his triumph.

I can readily, indeed, perceive from this address, that the church agrees with Dr. M. in understanding our Lord, when he speaks of being “born of water,” ‘to allude by anticipation to the sacrament of baptism, which he intended to ordain.’ ‡ And in this respect I agree with him also.

* See Appendix, Note XIV.

† P. 14.

‡ P. 8.

I likewise readily admit, as I have before done, that the church considers baptism as not only ‘a sign,’ but also ‘a means’ of regeneration.

But neither is this a point in dispute: and, with regard to points in which we really differ, I infer from the passage one or two things a good deal *opposed* to Dr. M.’s views.—Has he, I would ask, considered, with the attention which it deserves, that clause, ‘the great necessity of baptism *WHERE IT MAY BE HAD?*’ Would the church have presumed to interpolate such a limitation as this, in our Lord’s unlimited asseveration, that “except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God?” Far from her friends be the insinuation! Had she, then, supposed ‘no other than baptismal regeneration to be possible in this world,’* would she have ventured to say, ‘its great necessity *where it may be had;*’ when by Dr. M.’s own confession, our Lord has declared regeneration to be ‘*absolutely necessary,*’ ‘an *indispensable* requisite to salvation,’† in all cases?—From this clause, therefore, I conclude, without the fear of refutation, that it is NOT by baptism ONLY, ‘in the judgment of the church of England, that a man’ can be “born of water and of the Spirit,” in our Lord’s sense of the words.

Other passages have demonstrated, that, according to her judgment, a man may receive baptism ‘rightly administered,’ and yet not be thus born again: and this passage proves to me, that, in her judgment also, a man may be thus born again *otherwise* than by baptism.

No one, I trust, would be further than myself from depreciating ‘the necessity of baptism where it may be had,’ or of any other thing which Christ hath commanded; but yet I conceive a church, which expresses herself in this manner, would not go so near to pronouncing baptism es-

* P. 32.

† P. 24 and 25.

essential to salvation as Dr. M. has done.*—And I contend, that she had authority for making the limitation in question, as to the sacramental sign, though not as to the thing signified. The nature of Christianity furnished this authority: for it is a religion standing not in external rites, (however important, or necessary, ‘where they may be had,’) but in the substantial blessings of “righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”—The passage itself, as I have already shewn, † furnished ground for it: for, though our Lord, in one assertion of the necessity of the new birth, just mentions the external sign of “water,” he drops it in every other instance, insisting only upon being “born of the Spirit,” as the great essential thing intended.—And, finally, authority for such a limitation is furnished by the very words of the institution of this sacrament, which have been before commented upon, and which the church immediately proceeds to quote, as follows: ‘He gave command to his disciples, saying, *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.*’ By the omission of baptism in the second clause, our Lord shews that he did not intend to make it essential to salvation. †

‘To add more,’ that is peculiar to this office, Dr. M. says, ‘would be superfluous.’ I can by no means think so. To me it appears, that this very exhortation contains much more, which requires the particular attention of one who would ascertain the real doctrine of the church. We will recur to it, when we have considered some other parts of the service.

After another prayer, which has already been noticed, the persons to be baptized are addressed. They are re-

* See Tracts, p. 51 and 37: and above, c. iv.

† Above, c. ii.

minded of the prayers which have been offered for them, and of the promises of Christ to answer such prayers. They are then admonished, that, ‘after this promise made
 ‘ by Christ, they must also faithfully, for their parts, promise, in the presence of these their witnesses, and the
 ‘ whole congregation, that they will renounce the devil
 ‘ and all his works, and constantly believe God’s holy
 ‘ word, and obediently keep his commandments.’

The demands are then made, and the promises given:

‘ Q. Dost thou renounce the devil and all his works, &c.?

‘ A. I renounce them all.

‘ Q. Dost thou believe in God, &c.

‘ A. All this I steadfastly believe.

‘ Q. Wilt thou be baptized in this faith?

‘ A. That is my desire.

‘ Q. Wilt thou then obediently keep God’s holy will
 ‘ and commandments, &c.?

‘ A. I will endeavour so to do, God being my helper.’

This constitutes an essential and fundamental part of the proceeding. It is the express accession, on the part of the candidate, to that covenant of which we have been before assured that almighty God is most ready to perform his part. It is that, on his sincerity in which his title to the spiritual blessings of the covenant altogether depends. If this be wanting the transaction is vitiated, and the covenant is void *ab initio*, through the failure of one party in his engagement. On “the answer of a good conscience,” therefore, to the stipulations thus made, St. Peter, as we have seen, suspends the “saving” effect of baptism. Our church, we have shewn, does the same in her articles: she does it in her catechism: she does it in her homilies, where she declares, that ‘*by holy promises*, with calling the name of
 ‘ God to witness, we be made lively members of Christ, receiving the sacrament of baptism:’* and it must surely be

* Hom. of Swearing.

needless, after the quotation just given, to say, that she does the same in her baptismal services. This has ever been esteemed a principal part in the administration of this sacrament, insomuch that the judicious Hooker thinks it ‘a matter not easy for any man to prove that ever baptism did use to be administered without such interrogatories;’ and Bishop Burnet is of opinion that it ‘may reasonably be doubted, whether such baptism be true, in which no sponson is made.’ *

Shall we then imagine that this part of the service is lost sight of and forgotten in the declarations and thanksgivings which follow? So far from it, that, I am persuaded, this, in connection with the prayers of the church, forms the very basis on which they proceed.

After some further prayers, which have, as far as is necessary, been considered, the parties are baptized; ‘received into the congregation of Christ’s flock; and signed with the sign of the cross, in token that hereafter they shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, against sin, the world, and the devil; and to continue Christ’s faithful soldiers and servants unto their life’s end.’ All this shews what are the expectations of the church, and what her *suppositions* respecting them.

Then follow the terms, in which, if in any thing, lies the strength of Dr. M.’s cause. ‘Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that these persons are regenerate,’ or, as it is in another office, ‘by baptism regenerate,’ ‘and grafted into the body of Christ’s church, let us give thanks unto almighty God for these benefits.’ And accordingly the congregation are led to address themselves to almighty God, saying, ‘We yield thee hearty thanks; O heavenly

* Eccl. Pol. b. v. § 63. Burnet on Art. xxvii. Dr. Laurence’s argument from the office for private baptism is obviated in a note below.

‘ Father, that thou hast vouchsafed to call us to the knowledge of thy grace and faith in thee ; increase this knowledge and confirm this faith in us evermore. Give thy Holy Spirit to these persons ; that, *being now born again, and made heirs of everlasting salvation*, through our Lord Jesus Christ, they may continue thy servants and attain thy promises.’ Or, as it is somewhat more strongly in the other offices, ‘ that it hath pleased thee to regenerate ’ them ‘ with thy Holy Spirit, to receive them for thine own children by adoption, and to incorporate them into thy holy church.’ ‘ These words,’ Dr. M. says, ‘ must be left to speak for themselves. They admit of no illustration or explanation. Language cannot be plainer.’

Are we then to admit his conclusions from them, that the church supposes baptism, rightly administered, always to convey regeneration ? True it is, and we have no hesitation in acknowledging it, that she ‘ speaks of every person, ‘ whom she has baptized, as regenerate.’* But the question is, *on what grounds* she does this ? Is it because she holds, with Dr. M., that baptism necessarily, or, at least, constantly ‘ conveys regeneration to those to whom it is ‘ rightly administered ?’ After all that we have seen, I confidently answer, No. She has taught us in her catechism, that ‘ repentance and faith ’ are required in persons to be baptized. She has constantly inculcated it upon us in her articles, that ‘ in such only as worthily,’ that is, as she explains it, ‘ BY FAITH AND RIGHTLY,’ ‘ RECEIVE the same, ‘ the sacraments have a wholesome effect and operation :’ and does she, at once, render all null and void, by concluding that every one, who receives ‘ the outward sign,’ receives, as a thing of course, as an inseparable adjunct, ‘ the inward and spiritual grace ?’ Far from her be such self-contradiction and absurdity ! Irresistible and over-

* Tracts, p. 21.

powering indeed, and incapable of receiving any other explanation, must be the evidence which should drive us to such a conclusion.

But now what is the case? The whole appears to me to admit of the easiest and most natural explanation; explanation which proceeds upon the most common principles, and which, in fact, the church has herself pointed out to us. Let it be observed, that, before she thus speaks of her members as regenerate and born again, not only has she repeatedly prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit, and be born again, as for a blessing which might be wanting, even where baptism was ‘rightly administered;’ but she has commanded that they be ‘examined’ and ‘found fit,’ previously to their admission to baptism: she has admonished them of the necessity of ‘faithfully promising’ things, which no man who is not a partaker of ‘repentance and faith’ does or can ‘faithfully promise;’ and she has received their solemn vows and professions accordingly. Not till all this has taken place; not till this examination has been had, these prayers offered, these professions and vows made, as well as baptism administered; does she speak of the persons baptized, as ‘born again and made heirs of everlasting salvation?’ And now let me ask, Who is there amongst us all, entertaining even the strictest views of regeneration, as a moral change, ‘a change of heart,’ turning man from sin to holiness, and “from the power of Satan unto God,” that would hesitate to pronounce such persons ‘regenerate,’ “born again,” “passed from death unto life”—only supposing one thing—*only assuming them to be devout in the prayers in which they have been joining, sincere in the vows which they have been making?*

But suppose, on the other hand, all these awful forms gone through; these prayers offered up; these vows made; all in due order, indeed, as far as man could see, but with-

out any devoutness, any sincerity, any seriousness in the sight of God: suppose all this done, for example, by an unbelieving Jew, induced, (as we have reason to conclude many have been,) for the sake of wordly advantage, publicly to profess the faith of Christ, while privately he would blaspheme his name: who could, who *would* say, that, in such a case as this, any regeneration, any spiritual grace accompanied, what was, on the part of the receiver, at least, a profane and impious mummery? And, if no spiritual grace accompanied baptism in such a case as this, by parity of reason, we should have no right to conclude that any accompanied it, in other cases, where, though there might be less impiety, there should prove to have been no more sincerity or real devotion.

I contend, then, that the ground on which the church speaks of all those, whom she has baptized, as regenerate, is neither more nor less than THE SUPPOSITION—THE ASSUMPTION—OF THEIR SINCERITY IN THEIR PROFESSIONS. I contend, that, with regard to adults, (and the case of infants will be considered hereafter,) this is clear from the whole of the service itself; as well as necessary to the consistency of the service with the articles.

I have further said, that the church has herself given us the clue to this mode of understanding her language. A passage in the catechism to that effect will be considered on another occasion: at present I confine myself to the office before us. Let us turn back to the exhortation before noticed. What do we there read? ‘Doubt ye not, therefore, ‘but earnestly believe, that he will favourably receive these ‘present persons’—doing what? simply coming to baptism? No, let the words be marked—‘TRULY REPENTING, AND ‘COMING TO HIM BY FAITH.’ Here the supposition, *elsewhere implied and understood, is positively expressed:*

‘*Truly repenting and coming to him by faith.*’ This is what is *supposed* concerning them. It is *assumed*, that they come to baptism with the proper requisites for ‘RECEIVING IT ‘RIGHTLY,’ namely, with ‘REPENTANCE and FAITH.’* It would be a disbelief of God’s promises to doubt, whether, so COMING, they should receive the inward and spiritual grace or not: whether or not they should by baptism, ‘as ‘by an instrument, be grafted into the church; have the ‘promises of forgiveness of sin, and of their adoption to ‘be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, visibly signed and ‘sealed to them; their faith confirmed, and grace increased ‘by virtue of prayer unto God.’†

Agreeably likewise to what has been now argued and adduced, the baptized persons are, at the close of the service, addressed as ‘being made the *children of God* and of ‘the light’—how? by baptism? that indeed might be ‘a ‘sign,’ ‘a pledge,’ ‘a means:’ but the language here is, ‘made the children of God and of the light BY FAITH in ‘Jesus Christ.’ This again assumes their possession of faith, as well as points out the real source of their privileges.

I might add that the passage of the exhortation, just cited, is introduced by the quotation from St. Peter, which has been repeatedly noticed, and in which the apostle is careful to inform us, that “the answer of a good conscience,” that is, the very thing here assumed,—sincerity in the professions made, or a state of heart corresponding to them,—is the great thing requisite to our enjoying the blessing sought, and set forth to us, in baptism.

As far, then, as adults are concerned, I consider the intention of our church service as clearly and satisfactorily made out. No difficulty, it seems to me, need be supposed to remain upon the subject.

* See Appendix, Note XV.

† Art. xxvii.

CHAPTER VII.

The case of Infants.—Church service for their baptism—A passage in the catechism furnishes the key.—Bishop Hopkins's views of baptismal regeneration.

BUT I am aware that the case of infants, and the services appointed for their baptism, will probably be urged against the reasonings which I have used in the last chapter.

Even supposing it proved, that the adult subjects of baptism are pronounced regenerate, only upon the assumed sincerity of their repentance and faith, what, it may be said, are we to think concerning infants, who are not capable of exercising repentance and faith? Nay, seeing that the church has used the same language respecting them, as respecting adults, does not this demonstrate, that, however satisfactory the arguments employed in favour of a hypothetical construction of that language, even in the case of adults, might appear, they are indeed fallacious, and the conclusions drawn from them unfounded.

I admit, in return, the plausibility of this reasoning, but I am prepared to maintain, that it is unsound and delusive.

In the first place I observe, that the same prayers, and very nearly the same exhortations, are used in this case, as in that of adults.

And, in the next place, it is much to be remarked, that, though the infant is incapable of making any engagements whatever, the same professions and vows are required and made, as in the other case; and consequently furnish si-

milar inferences to those before drawn from them.—And of whom, it may be asked, are they required? Not of others as if undertaken by them for his benefit; but OF HIM, *through the medium of those who act for him.* ‘After this promise made by Christ, THIS INFANT must also faithfully, for his part, promise BY YOU that are his sureties, (until he come of age to take it upon himself,) that he will renounce the devil and all his works,’ &c.

Accordingly the questions run, ‘Dost thou, IN THE NAME of this child, renounce, believe,’ &c? Nay, ‘Wilt THOU be baptized?’—though it is the infant that is to be baptized:—‘Wilt THOU obediently keep God’s holy will and commandments?’ These questions are addressed as to the child himself: the answers considered as his answers. By a sort of legal fiction,* to which we are no strangers in the most important temporal transactions, the child is supposed, as it were, to speak in and by his sponsor. And, accordingly, after the baptism the sponsors are addressed, ‘Forasmuch as THIS CHILD hath promised BY YOU his sureties, &c.; ye must remember that it is your parts and duties to see, that he may be taught, so soon as he shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession, HE hath here made BY YOU.’

The engagements made are, to all intents and purposes, considered as the engagements of the children themselves. And accordingly, in the catechism, it is observed, that these promises, ‘when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.’ And for the explicit recognition of this obligation the rite of confirmation is appointed, in which they are asked, ‘Do ye here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that was made *in your name* at your baptism; ratifying and confirming the same in your own persons, and ac-

* See Appendix, Note XVI.

‘knowledging yourselves bound to believe, and to do all
 ‘those things, which your godfathers and godmothers then
 ‘undertook *for you?*’ *

Now all this is very remarkable. One is certainly somewhat at a loss for words, in which to speak of engagements, supposed to be made by an infant incapable of any knowledge of the transaction. But, when such promises and vows are *supposed* to be made, something must in like manner be *supposed* concerning what, in another case, we should call the sincerity with which they are made,—in short, concerning the performance of them: and, according to what is thus supposed, must be the language subsequently used of the party concerned in them. Here then, as before, I contend, that the church, by a hypothesis certainly not more bold, than that which imagines the infant to make engagements at all, *supposes* something which corresponds to *sincerity*:—supposes that the child will perform—or (what is perfectly possible,) that it even now, through the grace of God, possesses a disposition which will lead it, as it becomes capable of so doing, to perform its vows: and, *on the ground of this supposition*, returns thanks to almighty God, ‘that it hath pleased him to regenerate this infant
 ‘with his Holy Spirit, and to receive him for his own child
 ‘by adoption,’ as well as ‘to incorporate him into his holy
 ‘church.’

And this interpretation of the language employed, I support, as before, by the explicit doctrine of the articles; by

* ‘In your name,’ is the authorized and repeated explanation of the words *for you*.—Let it not be pretended that I use an overstrained interpretation of the words, in considering the questions as addressed to the infants, and the answers reputed as their’s. If the reader will turn to Hooker, b. v. § 64, he will find more than nine pages employed in explaining and vindicating the practice, under the following title: ‘Interrogatories proposed unto infants in baptism, and answered as in their names by godfathers.’

the nature of the baptismal service itself; and by what was urged above, the utter unreasonableness of supposing, that a blessing must *necessarily* attend the administration of baptism to an infant, which, it has been proved, does by no means necessarily accompany it to a grown person.—And on what ground is it argued, that the church holds regeneration always to accompany baptism in an infant? There is nothing stronger for it than the language, ‘We yield thee hearty thanks, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant.’ But the same language is used concerning adults, in whom the church, avowedly, does not consider baptism as having ‘a wholesome effect and operation’ necessarily, nor unless they receive it ‘with faith and rightly.’ But that which warrants no such conclusion in one case, cannot warrant it in the other.*

But, as the case of infants is obviously attended with difficulties peculiar to itself, the church has entered into explanation upon the subject: which, though among the passages omitted by Dr. M., is of great importance in the argument. In the catechism, it having been stated, that the things ‘required of persons to be baptized’ are ‘repentance, whereby they forsake sin, and faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament;’ the question occurs, ‘Why then are infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them?’ Now what should we have expected as the simple and natural answer to this question? I remember formerly to have thought, that the words of the twenty-seventh article, ‘The baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the church, *as most agreeable with the institution of Christ,*’ would have furnished

* See Appendix, Note XVII.

a more obvious and more satisfactory answer, than that which is given. And so they would have done, had it been intended merely to assign our *authority* for baptizing infants. But the answer returned makes it clear, that the question was designed to introduce an *explanation* of the principle upon which the church proceeds in receiving infants, and considering them in the manner she does. And in this view the answer is very important. It is this: ‘Because they ‘PROMISE them both’ (both repentance and faith,) ‘by ‘their sureties; which promise, when they come to age, ‘themselves are BOUND TO PERFORM.’

It is, then, avowedly, upon the ground of this promise, and in the expectation of its performance, that the church admits infants to baptism: and consequently it is upon the same ground, that she proceeds to speak of them in the manner we are considering.*

Here, therefore, is the same system of *charitable supposition*, which we have seen pervade the office for adult baptism. The prayers offered are supposed to have been sincerely offered; the promises made, it is presumed, will be performed; and, UPON THESE ASSUMPTIONS, the infant is spoken of as ‘regenerated by God’s Holy Spirit.’ But if these conditions fail; if the prayers have been offered in mere form; if the child, ‘when he comes to age,’ shews no disposition to keep his vows; then I feel myself warranted to conclude, that the spiritual blessing, dependent upon such conditions, is, with regard to him, null and void: and that, although, having been admitted into the visible church by the external sign of baptism with water, he needs not to be baptized again, yet without “the baptism of the “Holy Ghost,” without ‘spiritual regeneration,’ he never

* See Appendix, Note XVIII.

can be a member of the spiritual church of Christ,) consisting of all *true* believers,) or come to the kingdom of heaven.

If it be thought that there has been some more difficulty in making out this case than that of adults; I beg to suggest, that it is nothing more than what naturally results from the condition of infants, supposed to make vows, and, on the faith of those vows, pronounced regenerate; while they can give no evidence, in their conduct, either of a regenerate or an unregenerate state. And, on the other hand, does Dr. M. find no difficulty in the case of thousands and millions, whom he supposes to have been actually ‘quickened by the Holy Spirit,’ and to have had ‘a new principle of life and of action infused into them,’ at their baptism, whose life and actions, from their earliest to their latest days, give no evidence of any such principle existing within them?

I do therefore consider the passage, which I have quoted from the catechism, as furnishing, and designedly furnishing, the true key to the meaning of the church, in the language which she uses concerning infants. She requires of them by their sureties, as she does of adults personally, certain vows; she assumes that, when they become capable of it, they will perform those vows; and she speaks of them as (what in that case they must be,) regenerate, and the children of God by adoption and grace.*

* See Appendix, Note XIX.—It deserves to be remarked, that the part of the catechism, which treats of the sacraments, like the office for adult baptism, is of later date than the rest, having been inserted in the time of James I.: but it is equally authority with us: and, added as it was, must be supposed to have been designed, like a declaratory act of parliament, to furnish explanation, where explanation might be wanting.—I do not take any separate notice of the service for private baptism. That is but a sort of inchoate and imperfect proceeding, which is afterwards to be completed elsewhere. It *implies*, however, all the same

Hitherto I have considered the word *regeneration* as used only in its highest and most spiritual sense ; and have endeavoured to shew, under what limitations it may, in that sense, be applied as it is in these services : and this is the view which I myself take of the subject. It is not, however, to be overlooked that there is a lower sense, which, like many other terms of high import, the term regeneration may bear, and in which many persons understand it to be used in the offices of our church.

This I shall more fully explain from Bishop Hopkins ; whose ‘ Doctrine of the two Sacraments,’ and ‘ Nature and Necessity of Regeneration,’ well deserve the reader’s attentive perusal.*

He observes, that ‘ to be sanctified imports, in the proper signification of it, no other than to be appointed, separated, or dedicated to God.’ And so persons and places are often said to be consecrated and sanctified to the Lord.† But then there are two ways of dedication unto God ‘ . . . the one external, by men ; the other internal, and wrought by God himself.’

‘ As there is this twofold dedication or separation, so there is also a twofold sanctification. There is an external, relative, or ecclesiastical sanctification ; which is nothing else, but the devoting or giving up of a thing or person unto God, by those who have power so to do. There is

things which actually take place in the public service. Bp. Burnet says, ‘ It may reasonably be doubted whether such a baptism be true, in which no sponson is made ; and this cannot be well answered but by saying, that a general and an *implied* sponson is to be considered to be made by their parents, while they desire them to be baptized.’ On Art. xxvii.

* They are to be found in the second volume of his Works, as lately re-published by the Rev. Josiah Pratt, B. D.

† Exod. xiii. 2. xxviii. 41. xix. 23. Num. vii. 1. Heb. ix. 13. 2 Pet. i. 18.

‘ an internal, real, and spiritual sanctification : and, in
 ‘ this sense, a man is said to be sanctified, when the Holy
 ‘ Ghost doth infuse in his soul the habits of divine grace,
 ‘ and maketh him partaker of the divine nature, whereby
 ‘ he is inwardly qualified to glorify God in a holy life.’

In applying this distinction to baptism, he lays down the two following propositions.

1. ‘ *Baptism is the immediate means of our external and
 ‘ relative sanctification unto God.*—By this holy sacrament,
 ‘ all that are partakers of it are dedicated and separated
 ‘ unto him.’

From this it follows, as he shews at large, ‘ that those,
 ‘ who are baptized, may, in this ecclesiastical sense, be
 ‘ truly called saints, the children of God, and members of
 ‘ Christ, and, thereupon, inheritors of the kingdom of
 ‘ heaven.—Doubtless, so far forth baptism is a means of
 ‘ sanctification, as it is the solemn admission of persons
 ‘ into the visible church, as it separates them from the
 ‘ world, and from all false religions in it, and brings them out
 ‘ of the visible kingdom of the devil, into the visible king-
 ‘ dom of Jesus Christ . . . But this is only a relative sanctity,
 ‘ not a real : and many such saints and sanctified men there
 ‘ are, who shall never enter into heaven ; but, by their
 ‘ wicked lives, forfeit and lose that blessed inheritance to
 ‘ which they were called. Many there are, who are saints,
 ‘ by their separation from paganism and Judaism into fel-
 ‘ lowship with the visible church ; but they are not saints,
 ‘ by their separation from wicked and ungodly men into a
 ‘ spiritual fellowship with Christ. And yet, to such saints
 ‘ as these, all the ordinances of the church are due, till,
 ‘ for their notorious wickedness, they be cut off from that
 ‘ body, by the due execution of the sentence of excommu-
 ‘ nication.’ *—And then immediately follow the words,

* See Matt. xiii. 28—30

which, it has been observed above, Dr. M. quotes, though not with perfect fairness: ‘ Such a baptismal regeneration as this is must needs be acknowledged by all, that will not wilfully shut their eyes against the clear evidence of scripture; from which I have before brought plentiful proofs to confirm it.’

His lordship’s second proposition is this:

2. ‘ *That baptism is not so the means of an internal and real sanctification, as if all, to whom it is administered, were thereby spiritually renewed, and made partakers of the Holy Ghost in his saving graces.*

‘ Though an external and ecclesiastical sanctification be effected by baptism, *ex opere operato*, by the mere administration of that holy sacrament; yet so is not an internal and habitual sanctification: and that, whether we respect adult persons or infants. For adult persons we have a famous and uncontrollable instance, in the baptism of Simon Magus, who *believed* upon the preaching of the gospel: (for so it is said Acts, viii. 13.) and, upon the profession of faith in Jesus Christ, was admitted to the holy ordinance of baptism. Yet, ver. 23, St. Peter tells him, that he was still *in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity*: in the same state of sin and misery, and as much a blackmoor when he came out of the laver, as he was before he entered into it.—And, for infants, it is not easy to be conceived, what inward work can, in an ordinary manner, pass upon them . . . However, baptism was not instituted to any such purpose, that it should be an instrument of working a real change upon infants: for neither can it work this change by any immediate and proper efficiency, since the washing of the body cannot thus affect the soul, nor infuse any gracious habits into it, which itself hath not; neither can it work morally by way of suasion and argument, because infants have not the use of reason to apprehend any such. *Again, if this*

‘ *baptismal regeneration be real, by the infusion of habitual grace, how comes it to pass that the greater part of those, who have received it, lead profane and unholy lives, and too, too many perish in their sins?* Therefore I judge it unsound doctrine, to affirm, that baptism doth confer real sanctification upon all infants, as well as upon some adult persons, who are made partakers of it.’

He then supposes it objected, that ‘ the church hath appointed a prayer in the office of baptism wherein we bless God, that it hath pleased him to regenerate the baptized infant with his Holy Spirit : ’ and he remarks upon it, ‘ To this I answer, that the baptismal regeneration of infants is external and ecclesiastical. They are regenerated, as they are incorporated into the church of Christ : for this is called *regeneration*, Matt. xix. 28 : *Ye which have followed me in the regeneration :* i. e. in planting my church, which is the renewing of the world To be admitted, therefore, by baptism, into the church of Christ, is to be admitted into the state of regeneration, or the renewing of all things.’

‘ But how then are infants said, in baptism, to be regenerated *by the Holy Spirit*, if he doth not inwardly sanctify them in and by that ordinance ? I answer, Because the whole œconomy and dispensation of the kingdom of Christ is managed by the Spirit of Christ : so that those, who are internally sanctified, are regenerated by his effectual operation ; and those, who are only externally sanctified, are regenerated by his public institution. Infants, therefore, are in baptism regenerated by the Holy Ghost, because the Holy Spirit of God appoints this ordinance to receive them into the visible church, which is the regenerate part and state of the world.’

He adds two further propositions.

3. ‘ *It is not so the means of sanctification, as if none could be internally and really sanctified, who are necessarily deprived of that holy ordinance.*

4. ‘ *Baptism is an ordinary means appointed by Christ, for the real and effectual sanctification of his church.—For this is the great end of all gospel-ordinances, that through them, might be conveyed that grace, which might purify the heart and cleanse the life.*’ *

In this lower, external, and ecclesiastical sense, therefore, we may affirm, unconditionally, the regeneration of all ‘ to whom baptism is rightly administered.’

But, in the higher and spiritual sense of the term, we can predicate regeneration of baptized persons only hypothetically: namely, upon the supposition, in the case of adults, of their sincerity; and, in the case of infants, of their possessing that disposition, which shall lead them, when they become capable of it, to keep their baptismal vows.

* Hopkins’s Works, vol. ii. p. 416—428. Again, p. 468, he thus expresses the same sentiments: ‘ There is, indeed, a baptismal regeneration, whereby all, that are made partakers of that ordinance, are, according to scripture language, sanctified, renewed, and made the children of God, and brought within the bond of the covenant: but all this is but after an external manner; as being, in this ordinance, entered members of the visible church. This external regeneration by water entitles none to eternal life, but as the Spirit moves upon the face of these waters, and doth sometimes secretly convey quickening virtue through them.’

CHAPTER VIII.

That the hypothetical principle pervades the services of the church.

IF any thing could be wanting to reconcile us to the admission of a principle so natural and so common, as that of supposing professions made to be made sincerely, it would surely be sufficient, to find it generally adopted in the services of the church. ‘She puts,’ as it has been justly observed, ‘the language of real Christians into the mouth of all her worshippers,’ because they profess to bear that character. Not only does she in the collect for Christmas day use the language, ‘Grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit;’ but in that for the Epiphany, ‘Mercifully grant, that we, which know thee now by faith, may after this life have the fruition of thy glorious Godhead.’ The former of these prayers Dr. M. would fain mould into an argument in support of his sentiments: * but the hypothetical principle better explains them both, and it alone can explain the latter. We profess to be ‘regenerate and the children of God by adoption and grace,’ and ‘to know God by faith;’ our profession is assumed to be just, and we are spoken of accordingly.

But I would more particularly apply the remark to certain occasional services of the church.

And, in the first place, to the *confirmation-service*, which Dr. M. quotes, as decidedly making for him. The bishop

* Tracts, p. 17, 18.—See Note VII. in Appendix.

who presides at the office, it is true, is directed thus to pray :
 ‘ Almighty and everliving God, who hast vouchsafed to
 ‘ regenerate these thy servants by water and the Holy
 ‘ Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their
 ‘ sins ; strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with
 ‘ the Holy Ghost the comforter, and daily increase in them
 ‘ thy manifold gifts of grace ; ’ &c. Here Dr. M. observes,
 ‘ The assertion is plain and direct : the church affirms by
 ‘ the mouth of one of her governors, and she affirms it in
 ‘ the most solemn form of a prayer to the almighty and
 ‘ everliving God, that he has vouchsafed to regenerate his
 ‘ servants, who come now to be confirmed, by water and
 ‘ the Holy Ghost : not, as has been confidently alleged,
 ‘ *with a view to blessings contingent upon their future en-*
 ‘ *deavours,* * but with a view to those, which at baptism
 ‘ they actually receive.’ †

Now it is, in the first place, observable, that, in quoting the above passage, Dr. M. stops short of the clause, ‘ daily *increase in them* thy manifold gifts of grace,’ which implies that already they possess these gifts in some measure ; and of what nature they are, the following clauses explain :
 ‘ the spirit of wisdom and understanding ; the spirit of
 ‘ counsel and ghostly strength ; the spirit of knowledge
 ‘ and *true godliness ;* ’ &c. Again, in commenting upon the passage, he entirely drops the clause, ‘ hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins ; ’ which must mean, up to the present time, and not only at baptism. This is as much ‘ affirmed,’ as that God hath regenerated ‘ these his servants ; ’ but no one, I presume, would assert the present forgiveness of all the persons to be confirmed, unconditionally, merely on account of their baptism, and without any *supposition* made concerning the present state of their minds. And, lastly, what is most important of all,

* The reference is to Mr. Overton, p. 104.

† P. 16, 17.

Dr. M. makes no allusion to what has preceded, in this very service, respecting ‘these God’s servants.’ They have been admonished concerning the nature and intent of confirmation, and the instructions preparatory to it; the end of which is, that, ‘being now come to years of discretion, and having learned what their godfathers and godmothers promised for them in baptism, they may themselves, openly before the church, ratify and confirm the same; and also promise, that by the grace of God they will ever more endeavour themselves faithfully to observe such things, as they, by their own confession, have assented unto.’ They have next been interrogated by the bishop: ‘Do ye here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that was made in your name at your baptism; ratifying and confirming the same in your own persons, and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe, and to do, all those things, which your godfathers and godmothers then undertook for you?’ And to this solemn question ‘every one’ has ‘audibly answered, I do.’ Now, to quote the ‘affirmation’ without this admonition, examination, and profession, is, to my apprehension, like quoting an engagement, and suppressing the stipulation on which it is made. Concerning persons who make, and *are assumed sincerely to make* such professions, we may safely affirm, both that God hath ‘regenerated them,’ and that he hath ‘given unto them forgiveness of all their sins.’ But he that, after observing the spirit and conduct of too many who come to confirmation, can affirm such things of them absolutely, and merely on the ground of their baptism, must have not only very different views, but very different feelings, than I either have, or would wish to have.

I confidently conclude, therefore, that ‘the affirmation’ proceeds upon an assumption, that the profession is sincerely made: and, if that assumption fail, the affirmation,

concerning the persons' being 'regenerate and pardoned,' fails with it.—The confirmation-service, therefore, affords no instance of persons being pronounced regenerate, without regard to their present state of mind.

The visitation of the sick is the service to which we will next proceed. Here occurs a form of absolution which has caused difficulty to many persons. 'Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences: and, by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.'

I meddle not with other questions to which this formulary might give rise. But can any one doubt, upon what ground the absolution pronounced in it proceeds? Will any one imagine, that it is pronounced absolutely, *without any thing supposed* concerning the state of mind of the absolved? The very words of the preamble would repel such an imagination, for they speak only of 'a power to absolve sinners *truly repenting and believing in Christ.*' But here, as in the confirmation-service, the key to the right understanding of the passage is to be found in what precedes. This absolution is not to be pronounced till after the minister has 'examined' the sick person, 'whether he repent him truly of his sins, and be in charity with all the world:' not till he has 'moved him to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter.' 'After which confession,' it is directed, 'the priest shall absolve him (if he humbly and heartily desire it,) after this sort.'

Who does not see, then, that the absolution *proceeds upon the supposed sincerity* of the repentance, faith, and charity, professed by the person absolved? And, accord-

ingly, as a preceding prayer had implored, that ‘strength might be *added* to his faith, and seriousness to his repentance,’ (which supposes him already to possess repentance and faith;) so the prayer, which next follows, pleads in his behalf, ‘forasmuch as he putteth his full trust only in God’s mercy.’

The same is the case in the service for the *churching of women*. The woman returning thanks is assumed to be ‘the servant of the Lord,’ and ‘to put her trust in him:’ and is prayed for accordingly.

Another service, which has occasioned difficulty to many persons, is that for the *burial of the dead*. Here we speak of almighty God having been pleased, ‘of his great mercy, to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother here departed.’* And, again, we ‘give him thanks that it hath pleased him to deliver our deceased brother out of the miseries of this sinful world.’ Here no one doubts, that

* I do not cite the words which follow—‘We commit his body to the ground. . . in sure and certain hope of THE resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ:’ because they do not seem to me to require even that simple sort of comment, which I offer on the others. I cannot but wonder that friends of the church should have found such a difficulty, or foes such a handle in them, as they have done. The latter, indeed, have sometimes descended to *direct* mis-quotation in order to create, or strengthen the difficulty. The fact is, that these words describe the Christian hope generally, without special reference to the individual. The language seems designedly varied for this purpose. We commit HIS body to the ground, in sure ‘and certain hope of THE resurrection to eternal life.’ It is not said of *his* resurrection, as it naturally would have been had that been the meaning, but, generally, ‘of the resurrection.’ And accordingly it immediately follows, likewise in general language, ‘who shall change our vile body,’ &c. I am far from denying that the service supposes the deceased to be among those who may expect a blessed resurrection: I am admitting and asserting this. But that is not the thing expressed in this part of the service; and when it is afterwards expressed, it is in much more measured language: ‘that we may rest in him, as OUR HOPE is this our brother doth.’

the language employed *proceeds upon the supposition*, that the deceased was in reality, what he is understood to have been in profession, a sincere Christian. Whether in any cases, here or elsewhere, the system of *charitable hope and supposition* may have been carried too far, is not the present subject of inquiry. It is sufficient for my purpose to show, that that system does pervade the other services of the church, and therefore that it is not unreasonable to believe it to have been adopted in the offices for the administration of baptism.

Finally, I maintain that the *catechism* is composed upon the same principle. In it children are taught to speak of themselves, as ‘in baptism made members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.’ In profession, indeed, and, as Hooker’s language is, ‘in the eye of the church,’ they were undoubtedly made such : * but, if the words are to be taken in a higher and more spiritual sense, then it must be here *supposed*, that they have subsequently shewn themselves to be indeed ‘dead unto sin, and born anew unto righteousness.’ And accordingly it is to be observed, that to the question, ‘Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe and do as thy godfathers and godmothers promised for thee’ in thy baptism?’ the same persons, who are taught to use the above language also answer, ‘Yes verily, and *by God’s help so I will* : and *I heartily thank* our heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this state of salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour : and *I pray unto God* to give me his grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life’s end.’ And again afterwards they profess faith in ‘God the Holy Ghost, who *sanctifieth them* and all the elect people of God?’—Here the things supposed are expli-

* See extracts from Bp. Hopkins, close of c. vii.

citly enough avowed. Whoever does heartily purpose and endeavour, 'by God's help,' to keep his baptismal vows; whoever does 'heartily thank' God, and devoutly 'pray' 'unto him to give him his grace;' whoever is 'sanctified' 'by God the Holy Ghost, among the elect people of God,' is undoubtedly 'a member of Christ, a child of God, and' 'an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven,' in the highest sense of the terms. Whoever has, from the time of his baptism, possessed the disposition of mind, which these things imply, has undoubtedly been such from that time. But he who will affirm, that the very act of baptism necessarily makes a person such, seems to me to draw, from a few misinterpreted expressions, conclusions alike opposed to reason, to scripture, and to the doctrines of our church.

CHAPTER IX.

That the same principle is adopted in scripture.—An important question in the interpretation of the sacred writings.—Circumstances under which the strong language, used concerning baptized persons, was introduced.

EVERY reader of scripture, and particularly of the apostolic epistles, must have observed, that whole bodies of Christians are continually addressed, as partakers of the most exalted privileges and invaluable blessings. They are spoken to as persons who, “being justified by faith, have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:” as “those who shall be saved from wrath through him:” as “reconciled to God:” * as “washed, sanctified, justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God:” † as “sons of God, into whose hearts God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son:” ‡ as “blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:” as “sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of their inheritance:” § as persons “quickened from death in trespasses and sins:” || as having all “their sins forgiven them for Christ’s sake:” ** as those in whom “God hath begun a good work, which he will perform unto the day of Christ:” †† as “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, that they should shew forth the praises of him, who had called them out of darkness into his marvellous light:” †††

* Rom. v.

§ Eph. i.

†† Phil. i.

† 1 Cor. vi.

|| Eph. ii. Col. ii.

†† 1 Peter ii.

‡ Gal. iv.

** Eph. iv. Col. ii.

as “the sons of God, who, when their Lord shall appear, shall be like him, for they shall see him as he is.” *

Now respecting all these, and an indefinite number of like passages, the following question arises: Seeing they are addressed to societies consisting of mixed characters,—“tares and wheat growing together,”—how are they to be interpreted? Does all this exalted and delightful language express nothing more, than was common to Simon Magus with St. Peter? to the incestuous Corinthian with St. Paul? to Diotrephes with St. John? Is its meaning to be so lowered down and evaporated, that it may apply to all professors of Christianity, not excepting the most hypocritical, or the most profligate, as well as to the most consistent and honourable? Common readers will doubtless be startled at such questions. But too true it is, that they are not superfluous. A system has been devised, or at least matured and methodized, by an Arian dissenter, which, owing to circumstances much to be lamented, we are taught to believe is ‘at present extensively and increasingly prevalent among our clergy;’ and according to which, all these terms, apparently ‘expressive of an internal state,’ are made to mean ‘nothing but external privileges:’ and from the leaven of this doctrine the author of the tracts does not appear to be altogether free.† Leaving it to others more formally to refute so mischievous a scheme,‡ I shall content myself with briefly assigning my reasons for adopting a very different mode of interpretation.

I admit, indeed, that many high terms may occasionally be used in describing the privileges enjoyed by persons, as

* 1 John iii.

† Tracts, p. 8, 35, 45, &c.

‡ I am happy to refer to a refutation of Dr. Taylor’s ‘Key to the Apostolic Writings,’ and to a substitute for it, in a series of papers in the Christian Observer for 1807, which have been subsequently acknowledged as the work of the late excellent rector of Clapham, the Rev. John Venn, M. A.

members of the visible church of Christ.* But this does not induce me to believe, that all the exalted language, which has been quoted, is so applied. To disprove this, I should think it sufficient to appeal only to the common sense of every serious and pious reader. Let any such person carefully peruse, for example, six or eight verses at the beginning of St. Peter's first epistle, where he addresses the disciples, as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus:" as, "according to the abundant mercy of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, begotten again to a lively hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved for them in heaven;"—they being "kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation:" as "greatly rejoicing" in this hope, "though now for a season (if need were,) they might be in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of their faith, being much more precious than that of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found to praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:—whom, having not seen, they loved; in whom, though now they saw him not, yet believing, they rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls." Now, I ask, Can all the sophistry of man persuade any plain pious Christian, of competent understanding, that all this language means nothing more, than 'what belongs to all professed Christians without exception,' 'even to those, who,' though they should persevere in their present course, 'shall perish eternally?' † The supposition carries its own refutation on the face of it.

* See extracts from Bp. Hopkins, close of c. vii.

† Dr. Taylor's words.

But, further, not only is language expressive of *privilege* thus applied to bodies of Christians, but language directly and necessarily expressive of *moral excellence* is applied with equal liberality. They are spoken of, as “dead to sin,” as well as freed from condemnation: as those who had been “the servants of sin, but who have now obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine delivered unto them:” * as “walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” The Corinthians are considered as “washed and sanctified,” no less than “justified.” † The Ephesians “in time past walked in trespasses and sins,” ‡ but it is implied, that they did so no longer. “The work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope” § of the Thessalonians, were “remembered by the apostle without ceasing:” “their faith grew exceedingly,” and “their charity towards each other abounded.” Those, to whom St. Peter wrote, were sanctified “to obedience;” “loved the unseen Saviour;” and “had purified their souls, in obeying the truth, through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren.” || Now whatever else could, these things certainly could not, be predicated of any but true, and pure, and holy, and obedient believers: and therefore whatever difficulty may be imagined to arise, from the application of the language in question to ‘large societies’ of Christians, it is not to be removed by explaining the whole, of things common to ALL professed Christians.

And, finally, the limitation, the distinction, though usually left to be supplied by the common sense of the reader, is yet frequently enough expressed, to prevent its being overlooked or forgotten. A very few instances may evince this. “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit,”

* Rom. vi. † 1 Cor. vi. ‡ Eph. ii. § 1 Thess. i. || 1 Pet. i.

St. Paul says to the Romans, * “*if so be* that the Spirit of God dwell in you:” but, “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ,” so far from God being ‘his God, king, saviour, father, husband, shepherd,’† &c. on the ground of his being a professed Christian,—“he is none of Christ’s.” “As many as are *led* by the Spirit of God,” he says, “they are the sons of God.”‡ To the Corinthian Christians the same apostle writes, “Examine yourselves whether ye be *in the faith*; prove your own selves: know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”§ Though, speaking generally to the Galatians, he says, “Ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ,” yet he elsewhere tells them, that he “stood in doubt of them;” and admonishes them, that in Christ Jesus no faith availed, but that which “worked by love,”—nothing short of “a new creature.”|| Addressing the Philippians, he assigns his reason for thinking so favourably of them as he did: which is not their baptism, but that it was “meet for him to think this of them all, forasmuch as both in his bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, they all were partakers of his grace.”** The Colossians he expressly addresses *upon the ground of their profession*: “If ye then be risen with Christ seek those things which are above.”†† I do not mean to say, that such hypothetical sentences were intended to convey any specific doubt of their sincerity; but certainly they did convey a reference to their professions, and a call to act consistently with them.—In like manner St. Peter says to those to whom he wrote, “If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”‡‡ And St. John affirms, that, “if we say we have fellowship with God,

* C. viii.

† Dr. Taylor.

‡ Rom. viii.

§ 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

|| Gal. iii. 26. v. 6. vi. 15.

** Phil. i. 7.

†† Col. iii.

‡‡ 1 Pet. ii.

“ and walk in darkness,” or live in sin, “ we lie, and the truth is not in us : ” and that hereby only “ do we know that we know Christ, if we keep his commandments.”*

On the whole, then, I think it palpably evident, that we are by no means to solve the difficulty, (if difficulty it deserve to be called,) arising from the general application of exalted language to Christian churches, by lowering its meaning so as to adapt it to all professed Christians. An unspeakably easier and more obvious, I should have thought it a self-evident, solution is, that of understanding professed Christians to be addressed upon the ground of their profession—*upon the supposition of their sincerity*. This, we have seen, is continually done by our church : more or less it must be done at all times : and never could it be so natural to do it, as when the very profession of Christianity brought with it many dangers to men’s property, to their liberty, and even to their lives. In such times the apostles wrote, and in similar times the language was introduced, which has led men too frequently to confound the outward sign with the inward grace of baptism ; or at least to suppose, that the latter necessarily accompanies the former. In such times it was natural and reasonable to believe, that *professed* Christians were *real* Christians ; that those who were ‘ baptized ’ were indeed ‘ regenerate by the Spirit of ‘ God.’ And this affords a most easy account of the means by which the strong language, that has been so long in use, was brought into the church.

The circumstances of those times, as compared with our own, and the effect of them upon the language employed concerning professed Christians, have been well set forth by the learned prelate already frequently referred to. Though believing that Jesus is the Son of God, and the

* 1 John i. ii.

Saviour of the world, 'is not,' he says, 'regeneration, yet it was then almost an infallible test of it: and to persuade men to believe that Jesus was the Christ, was to prevail upon them to be truly and really converted. It was seldom seen among those primitive Christians, where there were no carnal respects, nor outward advantages, that could commend the gospel to the secular interests of men; when the only reward of professing Christ was reproaches, persecution, and martyrdom: seldom was it seen, that any were won over from heathenism or Judaism, to make profession of the despised name of Christ, but such, as were inwardly renewed by that almighty grace, that can conquer all the despites and affronts of the world: few were so foolish as to profess Christ in hypocrisy, when that hypocrisy would endanger their own lives; and yet, because it was but in hypocrisy, it could gain them no benefit by his death. Therefore it is, that the scripture speaks of those, that made a profession of the name of Christ, as if they were regenerated, because it was then almost an infallible mark of it. Thus you have it in 1 John iv. 15: "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God".... But now, when the very name of a Christian is become a title of honour, and the same punishments do now attend the denying of Christ, that then attended the acknowledgment of him, men may indeed be called by his name that never were effectually called by his grace, and may make a profession of the true faith, and yet remain Christian infidels.' *

The following confirmation of the doctrine of this chapter is derived from a publication of the Society for

* Bp. Hopkins, Works, vol. ii. p. 471.

promoting Christian Knowledge, of which more particular notice will shortly be taken. ‘ It is the way of the scriptures
‘ to speak to and of the visible members of the church of
‘ Christ, under such appellations and expressions as may
‘ seem at first hearing to imply, that they are all of them
‘ truly righteous and holy persons *The reason of which*
‘ *is, that they were visibly* BY OBLIGATION *and* BY PROFES-
‘ SION *all this*; which was thus represented to them, the
‘ more effectually to stir them up and engage them to live
‘ according to their profession and obligation.’ *

* Bp. Bradford, on Baptismal and Spiritual Regeneration.

CHAPTER X.

That regeneration is not restricted to baptism by the church of England—by the English reformers—by the divines to whose authority Dr. Mant appeals—or by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

I. THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.—I here confine myself strictly to the term *regeneration*, which, I contend, is not restricted to what accompanies baptism, and not merely to the doctrine. My proof is taken from the Homily for Whitsunday. It has occurred accidentally, and might probably be supported by other instances, were pains taken to search for them. I give the passage at length, because it both exhibits the doctrine of the church on some kindred points, of great importance, and presents us with, what must be in Dr. M.'s eyes, an extraordinary phenomenon,—a discussion on regeneration, and the third chapter of St. John's gospel, without even the mention of baptism!

‘ Where the Holy Ghost worketh, there nothing is impossible; as may further also appear by *the inward regeneration and sanctification of mankind*. When Christ said to Nicodemus, *Unless a man be born anew, of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*, he was greatly amazed in his mind, and began to reason with Christ; demanding *how a man might be born which was old*. Can he enter, saith he, *into his mother's womb again, and so be born anew?* Behold a lively pattern of a fleshly and carnal man! He had little or no intelligence of the Holy Ghost; and therefore he goeth bluntly

‘ to work, and asketh how this thing were possible to be
‘ true. Whereas, otherwise, if he had known the great
‘ power of the Holy Ghost in this behalf, that it is he which
‘ inwardly worketh *the regeneration and new birth* of man-
‘ kind, he would never have marvelled at Christ’s words;
‘ but would have rather taken occasion thereby to praise
‘ and glorify God.

‘ For as there are three several and sundry persons in the
‘ Deity, so have they three several and sundry offices pro-
‘ per unto each of them; the Father to create, the Son to
‘ redeem, the Holy Ghost to sanctify and regenerate.
‘ Whereof the last, the more it is hid from our under-
‘ standing, the more it ought to move all men to wonder
‘ at the secret and mighty working of God’s Holy Spirit,
‘ which is within us. For it is the Holy Ghost, and no
‘ other thing, that doth quicken the minds of men; stirring
‘ up good and godly motions in their hearts, which are
‘ agreeable to the will and commandment of God; such as
‘ otherwise of their own crooked and perverse nature they
‘ should never have. *That which is born of the flesh*, saith
‘ Christ, *is flesh*; and *that which is born of the Spirit is*
‘ *spirit*. As who should say, Man of his own nature is
‘ fleshly and carnal, corrupt and nought, sinful and dis-
‘ obedient to God, without any spark of goodness in him,
‘ without any virtuous or godly motion, only given to evil
‘ thoughts and wicked deeds. As for the works of the
‘ Spirit, the fruits of faith, charitable and godly motions,
‘ if he have any at all in him, they proceed only of the
‘ Holy Ghost; who is the only worker of our sanctification,
‘ and maketh us new men in Christ Jesus. Did not God’s
‘ Holy Spirit miraculously work in the child David, when
‘ of a poor shepherd he became a princely prophet? Did not
‘ God’s Holy Spirit miraculously work in Matthew, *sitting at*
‘ *the receipt of custom*, when, of a proud publican, he became
‘ a humble and lowly evangelist? And who can choose
‘ but marvel, to consider that Peter should become, of a

‘ simple fisher, a chief and mighty apostle? Paul, of a
‘ cruel and bloody persecutor, a faithful disciple of Christ
‘ to teach the gentiles? *Such is the power of the Holy*
‘ *Ghost TO REGENERATE MEN, and, as it were, TO BRING*
‘ *THEM FORTH ANEW, so that they shall be nothing like the*
‘ *men that they were before.*

‘ Neither doth he think it sufficient inwardly to work the
‘ spiritual and new birth of man, unless he do also dwell
‘ and abide in him. *Know ye not, saith St. Paul, that ye*
‘ *are the temple of God, and that his Spirit dwelleth in you?*
‘ *Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy*
‘ *Ghost which is within you?* Again he saith, *You are not*
‘ *in the flesh, but in the Spirit. For why? The Spirit of*
‘ *God dwelleth in you.* To this agreeth the doctrine of St.
‘ John, writing on this wise: *The anointing which ye have*
‘ *received—he meaneth the Holy Ghost—dwelleth in you.*
‘ And the doctrine of Peter saith the same, who hath
‘ these words: *The Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon*
‘ *you.*

‘ O what comfort is this to the heart of a true Christian,
‘ to think that the Holy Ghost dwelleth within him! *If God*
‘ *be with us, as the apostle saith, who can be against us?*

‘ O but how shall I know that the Holy Ghost is within
‘ me? some man perchance will say. Forsooth, *as the tree*
‘ *is known by his fruit, so is also the Holy Ghost.* The
‘ fruits of the Holy Ghost, according to the mind of St.
‘ Paul, are these: *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentle-*
‘ *ness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance.* Con-
‘ trariwise, the deeds of the flesh are these: *adultery, for-*
‘ *nication, uncleanness, wantonness, idolatry, witchcraft,*
‘ *hatred, debate, emulation, wrath, contention, sedition, heresy,*
‘ *envy, murder, drunkenness, gluttony, and such like.*

‘ Here is now that glass, wherein thou must behold
‘ thyself, and discern whether thou have the Holy Ghost
‘ within thee, or the spirit of the flesh. If thou see that
‘ thy works be virtuous and good, consonant to the pre-

‘script rule of God’s word, savouring and tasting not of the flesh, but of the Spirit; then assure thyself that thou art endued with the Holy Ghost; otherwise, in thinking well of thyself, thou dost nothing else but deceive thyself.’ *

Here is the very term *regeneration*, and *regeneration by the Holy Ghost*, used for a change of mind, which produces ‘good and godly motions in the heart;’ by which, and by the conduct resulting from them, we are taught to determine whether we be ‘endued with the Holy Ghost’ or not. The term is applied to the change wrought in David, St. Matthew, St. Peter, and St. Paul. Now what authority is there for ascribing St. Peter’s change, from ‘a simple fisher to a mighty apostle,’ to his baptism? What for saying one word of baptism in the case of ‘Matthew, *sitting at the receipt of custom*, when of a proud publican he became a humble and lowly evangelist?’ And most of all, what has the ‘regeneration’ of David, ‘when of a poor shepherd he became a princely prophet,’ to do with baptism?—Whatever be the nature of the change here described by it, the passage demonstrates, that the church does not *confine* the term to baptism, or the effect of baptism, or consider ‘any other than baptismal regeneration as impossible in this world.’

II. THE ENGLISH REFORMERS.—Here, again, I do not pretend to have carried my investigation to any great length. A few decisive passages must suffice.

* The two last paragraphs furnish a very sufficient answer to Dr. M.’s assertion, p. 25, ‘that, if the work of regeneration is not effected by baptism, . . . we are left without’ any other criterion, than ‘our own imaginations, or our own feelings, to determine whether’ we are regenerate or not. ‘Forsooth, as the tree is known by his fruit, so is also the Holy Ghost.’ This is the criterion.

Archbishop *Cranmer* is unequivocal in declaring, that the inward grace does not always accompany the outward sign. He says, ‘As in baptism, those who come feignedly, and those that come unfeignedly, both be washed with the sacramental water, but both be not washed with the Holy Ghost, and clothed with Christ: so in the Lord’s supper,’ &c.* And again, ‘Whosoever cometh to that water, being of the age of discretion, must examine himself duly, lest, if he come unworthily, (none otherwise than he would come unto other common water,) he be not renewed in Christ, but instead of salvation receive his damnation.’—Does, then, this venerable metropolitan and martyr ‘doubt the inward and spiritual grace of baptism,’ and ‘deny its sacramental character?’ No one, assuredly, will affirm it.—This, however, is not precisely the subject of the present chapter.

Latimer, bishop and martyr, speaks more directly to our present purpose.—‘Christ saith, *Except a man be born again from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* He must have *regeneration*. And what is this regeneration? It is not to be christened in water, (as these firebrands † expound it,) and nothing else. How is it to be expounded then? St. Peter sheweth, that one place of scripture declareth another. It is the circumstance and collation of places that make scripture plain. Saith St. Peter, *We be born again.* How? *Not by a mortal seed, but by an immortal.* What is this immortal seed? *By the word of the living God.* By the word of God PREACHED AND OPENED. THUS COMETH IN OUR NEW BIRTH.’ ‡

Dr. M. § quotes from this venerable reformer a passage

* Fathers of the English Church, vol. iii. p. 335.

† Meaning the Papists.

‡ Fathers, &c. vol. ii. p. 654, 655.

§ P. 27.

which contains nothing decisive : but how far he is from sanctioning the doctrine, that regeneration or new-birth is ‘ conveyed exclusively by baptism,’ the reader may now judge.

Hooper, bishop and martyr. ‘ Such as be baptized must remember, that repentance and faith precede this external sign ; and in Christ the purgation was inwardly obtained, BEFORE the external sign was given. So that there are two kinds of baptism, and both necessary. The one interior, which is the cleansing of the heart, the drawing of the Father, the operation of the Holy Ghost : and this baptism is in man, *when he believeth* and trusteth that Christ is the only actor of his salvation.’—‘ Thus be the infants examined concerning repentance and faith, before they be baptized with water ; at the contemplation of which faith, God purgeth the soul. Then is the exterior sign and deed *not to purge the heart ; but to confirm, manifest, and open unto the world*, that this child is God’s.’—‘ A traitor may receive the crown, and yet be true king nothing the more : so a hypocrite and infidel may receive the external sign of baptism, and yet be *no Christian man*, any the more ; as *Simon Magus* and others.’*

Again : ‘ Like as the king’s majesty, that now is, immediately after the death of the king his father, was the true and legitimate king of England, right heir unto the crown, and received his coronation, not to *make* himself thereby king, but to *manifest* that the kingdom appertained unto him before. He took the crown *to confirm* his right and title. . . Though this ceremony confirm and manifest a man in his kingdom, yet it maketh not a king. . . So it is in the church of Christ : man is made a brother of Christ, and heir of eternal life by God’s only mercy, received

* Fathers, &c. vol. v. p. 169, 170, 171.

‘ by faith, before he receive any ceremony to confirm and
 ‘ manifest openly his right and title.... Thus assured of
 ‘ God, and cleansed from sin in Christ, he hath the livery
 ‘ of God given him, *baptism*, the which no Christian should
 ‘ neglect; and yet not attribute his sanctification unto the
 ‘ external sign.’

The discerning reader will discover, in these passages, corroboration of several things which have already been advanced, and of some which remain to be urged.

John Frith, martyr. ‘ This outward sign doth neither give
 ‘ us the Spirit of God, neither yet grace, that is, the
 ‘ favour of God. For, if through the washing of the
 ‘ water the Spirit of grace were given, then it would follow,
 ‘ that whosoever were baptized in the water should receive
 ‘ this precious gift. But that is not so; wherefore I must
 ‘ needs conclude, that this outward sign, by any power or
 ‘ influence that it hath, bringeth not the Spirit and favour
 ‘ of God. That every one receiveth not this treasure in bap-
 ‘ tism it is evident: for put the case, that a Jew or an in-
 ‘ fidel should say that he did believe, and believe not in-
 ‘ deed; and upon his words were baptized indeed, (for no
 ‘ man can judge what his heart is, but we must receive him
 ‘ unto baptism, if he confesses our faith with his mouth,
 ‘ albeit his heart be far from thence;) this miscreant, now
 ‘ thus baptized, hath received this outward sign and sacra-
 ‘ ment as well as the most faithful man believing.* How-
 ‘ beit, he neither receiveth the Spirit of God, neither yet
 ‘ any grace but rather condemnation.’—‘ It followeth that
 ‘ the outward sign giveth no man any grace. Moreover,
 ‘ if the Spirit of God and his grace were bound unto the
 ‘ sacraments, then where the sacraments were ministered,
 ‘ there must the Spirit of grace wait on; and where they

* *Qu. living?*

‘ were not ministered should be neither Spirit nor grace.
 ‘ But that is false; for Cornelius and all his household received the Holy Ghost, before they were baptized. Here
 ‘ we may see that, as the Spirit of God lighteth where he will, neither is he bound to any thing. Yea, and this
 ‘ example doth well declare unto us, that the sacraments
 ‘ are given to be an outward witness to all the congregation
 ‘ of that grace, which is given *before* privately to every
 ‘ man.’—‘ When we baptize one that is come unto the years
 ‘ of discretion, we ask of him whether he believe: if he answer, Yea, and desire baptism, he is baptized: so that
 ‘ we require faith of him, *before* he be baptized, (which is
 ‘ the gift of God, and cometh of grace,) and so it is an
 ‘ outward sign of his invisible faith, which was *before* given
 ‘ him of God.’

‘ His supposition ’ (Rastall’s) ‘ is, that all men, which
 ‘ are baptized with material water, are very Christian men,
 ‘ and have the true faith, and are those which Paul affirm
 ‘ eth to be *without spot, blame, or wrinkle*.* But thereto I
 ‘ say, Nay; for even as the outward circumcision made not
 ‘ the Jews the elect people, and children of salvation; so
 ‘ doth not the outward baptism make us the faithful members
 ‘ of Christ: but as they were the children of God, who
 ‘ were inwardly circumcised, even so they, that are washed
 ‘ inwardly from the concupiscence of this world, are the
 ‘ members of Christ.’ †.

Clement, who escaped martyrdom by dying in prison.
 ‘ Until the Spirit of *regeneration* be given us of God, we
 ‘ can neither will, do, speak, nor think any good thing,
 ‘ that is acceptable in his sight. Let us *therefore* always
 ‘ pray to God, that he will make in us a clean heart, and
 ‘ renew in us an upright spirit.’ ‡ Let the reader observe

* So Dr. Mant, p. 33: above, p. 35.

† Fathers, &c. vol. i. p. 384—386, 408.

‡ Fathers, &c. vol. iv. p. 296. Clement’s confession ‘ may be looked

the connection of the parts in this sentence, and then determine whether it be not an exhortation to us to *pray for regeneration*.

Dr. M. quotes from King Edward's catechism as follows :
 ' Baptism doth represent and set before our eyes that we
 ' are by the Spirit of Christ new born, and cleansed from
 ' sin ; that we be members and parts of his church, received
 ' into the communion of saints. For water signifieth the
 ' Spirit.' What confirmation of his sentiments Dr. M. finds in this passage, I am at a loss to conceive. That baptism 'represents' and 'signifies' these things is not disputed : but that it was the doctrine of King Edward's days, that the sign and the thing signified always went together, no one, I think, can believe, after reading the passages just recited. Of this, however, I add one more confirmation from another catechism of great repute, I mean, that usually called Dean Nowell's. It is supposed to have been prepared by the same persons who drew up our articles. It was sanctioned by the convocation which sanctioned the articles. - It was recommended by the king's letters patent, and its use enjoined by the privy council. It has also been recently republished by two distinguished prelates, Bishop Cleaver and Bishop Randolph. Now in what manner does this catechism speak upon the point before us ? It speaks in a manner which may serve as a key to the right understanding of many of Dr. M.'s quotations.

' *Master*. Thou seemest to make the water but a certain
 ' figure of divine things. *Scholar*. It is a figure, indeed, but
 ' not empty or deceitful, but such as hath the truth of the
 ' things themselves joined and knit unto it. For, as in baptism
 ' God truly delivereth us forgiveness of sins and newness of
 ' life, so do we certainly receive them. For God forbid that
 ' upon as an account of the belief of the professors in those days.'
Strype.

‘ we should think that God mocketh and deceiveth us with ‘ vain figures.’—Now had Dr. M. observed this passage, would he not have deemed it decisively in his favour? But hear how it is interpreted in what presently follows.— ‘ Master. *Do all generally, and without difference, receive this grace?* Scholar. *THE ONLY FAITHFUL RECEIVE THIS FRUIT, but the unbelieving in refusing the promises offered them by God, shut up the entry against themselves, and go away empty. Yet do they not thereby make that the sacraments LOSE THEIR FORCE AND NATURE.*’—No doubt many of Dr. M.’s authorities are to be understood in the same way: that is, they speak only of those who ‘ receive the ‘ sacraments rightly,’ though he has understood them to speak of all, to whom the sacraments are ‘ rightly administered.’ *

III. THE FATHERS AND OTHER DIVINES CITED BY DR. MANT.—I had not intended at all to meddle with any other of Dr. M.’s authorities, than the scriptures, and the sanctioned writings of the church of England: and I have intimated as much in a note on a former chapter. My reasons were partly, that I consider no other authorities, however respectable, as binding upon us, either as Christians or as churchmen: and partly the time and labour, which the examination of various authors, to collect their sentiments upon a given topic, must cost. But, in turning over the pages of a valuable periodical publication, I have met with a number of passages, which may sufficiently answer my purpose, and which will doubtless add to the reader’s satisfaction.

Dr. M. avails himself with great confidence of the authority of the fathers: and I readily admit, that he may

* Dr. Laurence observes, that certain writings ‘ must always be ‘ UNDERSTOOD, when alluding to the case of adults, *to confine the application of* regeneration in baptism ‘ to those only who believe.’ *Vindication*, p. 61, 62.—For the sentiments of Bishop Jewell, see Appendix, Note XX.

adduce many things from them which may be *really*, and many more which are *apparently*, favourable to his views. He observes, ‘Baptism, indeed, and regeneration, the terms which specifically denote the outward sign and the spiritual grace, appear to have been employed by early Christians, as expressions of the same import.’ But would he hence infer, that the two things were believed to be the same, or inseparably connected together? St. Austin, as quoted in the ‘Homily of common prayer and the sacraments,’ will furnish him with a better explanation of the fact. He saith, ‘If sacraments had not a certain similitude of those things of which they be sacraments, they should be no sacraments at all. And of this similitude they do, for the most part, receive the names of the self-same things they signify.’ Combine with this, what was observed at the close of the preceding chapter, concerning the circumstances of the primitive times, and the comparatively few instances, in which the profession of faith was separated from a real conversion of the heart unto God; and the interchange of the terms for each other will be satisfactorily explained, without supposing that, among primitive Christians, the sign was confounded with the thing signified, or the one supposed to be inseparable from the other.

This may account, as far as it is necessary to account, for the language so frequently quoted from Justin Martyr. ‘Whoever are persuaded and believe that the things taught and said by us are true, and undertake to live according to them,’ are led by us to a place where there is water, and are regenerated in the same manner, in which we were regenerated.’ *

St. Austin is the only father whom Dr. M. cites, besides Justin, and the language ascribed to him has been noticed above.† To Dr. M.’s quotation I beg leave to oppose what

* Tracts, p. 38.

† P. 33, note.

follows. ‘Theodoret’s opinion, as often quoted by the old writers . . . is, *Gratia sacramentum aliquando præcedit, aliquando sequitur, aliquando nec sequitur*.* St. Augustine (on the 77th Psalm) thus resolves, *Omnes eundem potum spirituales biberunt, sed non in omnibus bene placitum est Deo: et cum essent omnia communia sacramenta, non communis erat omnibus gratia, quæ sacramentorum virtus est. Sicut et nunc, jam revelatâ fide, quæ tunc velabatur, omnibus, in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti baptizatis, commune est lavacrum regenerationis; sed ipsa gratia, cujus sunt sacramenta, quâ membra corporis Christi cum suo capite regenerata sunt, non communis est omnibus*.† In his fifth book against the Donatists, c. 24, he says, *Christ is put on sometimes, usque ad sacramenti perceptionem, as far as the receiving of the sacrament, sometimes also unto sanctification of life; the first is common to good and bad, the other is proper to the good and godly*. St. Chrysostom, in his fifth homily on St. Matthew, observes, *Many are baptized with water, who are not baptized with the Holy Ghost; they seem to be the sons of God in respect of their baptism, but indeed they are not the sons of God, because they are not baptized with the Holy Ghost*. St. Jerome has a similar passage, in his commentary on the third chapter of the Galatians.‡

* ‘Grace sometimes precedes the sacrament, sometimes follows it, and sometimes does not even follow it.’

† ‘All did drink the same spiritual drink, but not with all was God well pleased; and when the sacraments were all common, the grace was not common to all, which constitutes the virtue of the sacraments. So also now, when faith is revealed, which was then veiled, the laver of regeneration is common to all, who are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; but the grace itself, of which they are sacraments, and by which the members of the body of Christ are regenerated with their head, is not common to all.’

‡ Christian Observer, 1804, p. 565. Many valuable papers, connected with the subjects of this work, are dispersed through the volumes

More direct contradiction to Dr. M.'s principles cannot easily be conceived. Instead of regeneration being always conveyed by baptism, 'Grace sometimes precedes, sometimes follows, and sometimes not even follows, the sacrament.' Instead of all baptized persons being spiritually regenerate, 'The washing of regeneration is common to all, but not so that grace of the sacrament, by which the members of Christ are regenerated with their head.' 'The putting on of Christ, as far as the receiving of the sacrament, is common to good and bad; the putting him on to the sanctification of life is peculiar to the good and godly.' 'Many are baptized with water, who are not baptized with the Holy Ghost; and these are not indeed the sons of God.'

These passages evince, both that, in the judgment of these fathers, regeneration is not restricted, either as to the name or the thing, to what takes place at baptism; and that baptism may be 'rightly administered' and no spiritual regeneration conveyed.*

Hooker may be deservedly placed at the head of the more modern divines of whose authority Dr. M. avails himself. In the same place, from which I have taken the above quotations from the fathers, I find the following account of his sentiments on the subject before us, which I take to be perfectly just: 'No author is more express as to the efficacy of the sacraments, and the necessity of our using them, than he is; but, by comparing different parts of his works together, it will appear, that he did not extend their virtue in that unlimited and indiscriminate manner' which some now wish to do. 'Speaking as he

of the *Christian Observer*. See particularly vol. for 1802, p. 764: 1803, p. 396, 561: 1804, p. 565: 1809, p. 794: 1811, p. 584: 1812, p. 365: 1813, p. 161, &c.

* See Appendix, Note XXI.

‘ generally does, in the name of real believers,’ he uses language, which constitutes Dr. M.’s only quotation from him, as follows: ‘ As we are not naturally men without birth, so neither are we Christian men, *in the eye of the church of God*, but by new birth; nor, according to *the manifest ordinary course* of divine dispensation, new born, but by that baptism, which both declareth and maketh us Christians. In which respect we justly hold it to be *the door of our actual entrance into God’s house*, the first APPARENT beginning of life; a seal perhaps to the grace of election before received, but *to our sanctification here* a step that hath not any before it.’*

If the reader will duly attend to the words marked in italics, and which are certainly very important to the sense of the passage, he may find the whole much less favourable to Dr. M.’s sentiments, than might at first be supposed. Hooker speaks principally of what takes place ‘ in the eye of the church;’ of ‘ our entrance into God’s house,’ or the church; of ‘ the first *apparent* beginning of life;’ of ‘ the *manifest ordinary* course of divine dispensation;’ and of ‘ our sanctification here:’ which last expression, when compared with his avowed sentiment, that ‘ grace’ and ‘ the inward baptism’ may precede the outward, must evidently mean our separation and outward consecration to God, as before explained from Bishop Hopkins.

On the whole, the following passages will be found, I think, much more clearly against Dr. M., than this appears to be in his favour.

‘ They,’ the sacraments, ‘ are not physical, but moral instruments of salvation, duties of service and worship: which unless we perform as the author of grace requireth, they are unprofitable: *for, all receive not the grace of God which receive the sacraments of grace.*’† How does

* Book v. § 60. p. 243.

† Book v. § 57. p. 239.

this accord with Dr. M.'s notion of a sacrament's necessarily or constantly conveying the inward grace of which it is a sign?

‘ If outward baptism were a cause in itself possessed of that power, either natural or supernatural, without the present operation whereof no such effect could possibly grow; it must then follow that. . . no man could ever receive grace *before* baptism: which being apparently both known, and also confessed to be otherwise,’* &c.

Again: ‘ It is on all parts gladly confessed, that there may be in divers cases life by virtue of inward baptism, even where outward is not found.’†

Is not this regeneration before baptism, and without baptism? Yet Dr. M. says, ‘ no other than baptismal regeneration is possible in this world.’‡

Bishop Andrews is one of Dr. M.'s authorities. Yet in a sermon which Dr. M. himself has adopted from this prelate, and published among his own ‘ Sermons for parochial and domestic use,’ we have, in that very edition of it, these words: ‘ If we do not receive the Holy Ghost, nothing else that we receive will do us any good. Receive the word, it is but a killing letter; *receive baptism, it is but John's baptism, but a weak and beggarly element,*’§ &c.

Bishop Beveridge is an author whom Dr. M. repeatedly quotes: and certainly the language which in one sermon he uses, respecting the connection between regeneration and baptism, is very strong. Yet the following passages, from his seventy-third sermon, (on 1 Pet. i. 3.) shew, that there was no small difference between his sentiments and those of Dr. M.

* Book v. § 57. p. 246, 247.

† Ibid. p. 250.

‡ See Appendix, Note XXII.

§ Mant's Sermons, vol. i. p. 330, 331.

‘ *When a man believes in Christ the second Adam, and so*
 ‘ *is made a member of his body, he is quickened and ani-*
 ‘ *mated by his Spirit, which being the principle of a new*
 ‘ *life in him, he thereby becomes a new creature, another*
 ‘ *kind of creature from what he was before, and therefore*
 ‘ *is properly said to be BORN AGAIN, not of blood, nor of the*
 ‘ *will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God...* His
 ‘ *whole nature is changed...* He hath a new set of thoughts
 ‘ *and affections, a new sight and sense of God, a new bias*
 ‘ *upon his mind, so that he is now as much inclined to virtue*
 ‘ *as he was before to vice; and of a foolish, proud, sinful,*
 ‘ *and carnal creature, is become wise, and humble, and holy,*
 ‘ *and spiritual...* And, whereas other men are born only of
 ‘ *the flesh, such a one is REGENERATE, OR BORN AGAIN of the*
 ‘ *Spirit, according to that remarkable saying of our blessed*
 ‘ *Saviour, That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that*
 ‘ *which is born of the Spirit is spirit: ...every thing being of*
 ‘ *the same nature with that, from which it proceeds...* Hence
 ‘ *all such are called the SONS OF GOD, and are really so.*’*

All this, and much more to the same effect, occurs under the first general head of the sermon, namely, ‘ That the saints of God are begotten again by him.’ The venerable prelate quotes John iii. 5, yet he says not a word of baptism in the whole discussion! Nay, were it possible for any one to persuade himself, that such a change, as he describes, is made in the nature of every man by his baptism, the bishop shews, that he, at least, has no such thing in his contemplation; for he expressly refers it to the time, ‘ when a man BELIEVES in Christ,’ not to the time when he is baptized.

The learned *Joseph Mede* is quoted by Dr. M. for the sentiment, ‘ that in the baptism of Christ the mystery of

* Beveridge’s Works, vol. i. p. 609, 610.

‘ all our baptisms was visibly acted ; and that God says to every one *truly baptized*, as he said to him in a proportionable sense, Thou art my son, in whom I am well pleased.’ * Now surely it is but reasonable, unless the context irresistibly determine otherwise, to understand here, by ‘ truly baptized,’ what our church expresses by ‘ receiving baptism rightly.’ For who would presume to affirm, that God says to a wicked man, hypocritically receiving baptism, “ Thou art my son, in whom I am well pleased ? ”—And that Mede’s sentiments do indeed correspond with this interpretation, as well as that he does not confine regeneration to the period of baptism, will be evident from the following extract. ‘ Regeneration, or new birth, consists of these two parts, *repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ* : . . . that is, the whole mystery of regeneration, whereby a man becomes the child of God, and a member of the kingdom of heaven. Both joined together make a *new birth*, or a *new man*.’ † How does this agree with the idea, that the new birth is inseparable from baptism, and ‘ that no other than baptismal regeneration is possible in this world ? ’

In his second tract, Dr. M. twice refers to *Barrow*. The reader who will turn to the second volume of this great man’s works, Sermon 34, will find, that he ‘ represents regeneration to be a spiritual change, effected by the influence of the Holy Spirit, on the mind, the will, and the affections of an adult sinner,’ ‡ and even describes, somewhat minutely, the sort of process by which it is produced. ‘ Both these operations together,’ he says, ‘ (enlightening our minds, sanctifying our will and affections,) do constitute and accomplish that work, which is styled the REGENERATION, *renovation, vivification, new-creation, re-*

* Tracts, p. 36.

† Mede’s Discourses, 1652, p. 30.

‡ Christian Observer, 1812, p. 342.

‘ *surrection* of man ; the faculties of our souls being so improved, that we become as it were other men thereby ; able and apt to do that, for which before we were altogether indisposed and unfit.’ Barrow, therefore, is a stranger to Dr. M.’s distinction between regeneration and renovation : nor does he appear to have any idea of confining regeneration to baptism.

The following passage is from *Archbishop Tillotson’s* sermon on Galatians vi. 15. ‘ After many strugglings and conflicts with their lusts, and the strong bias of evil habits, this resolution, assisted by the grace of God, does effectually prevail, and make a real change both in the temper of their minds, and the course of their lives ; and when that is done, and not before, they are said to be REGENERATE.’

If then, in preaching regeneration to baptized adults, we be guilty of fanaticism ‘ and heresy,’ we have the satisfaction of knowing, that the profound Barrow, and the ‘ proverbially sober ’ Tillotson, have erred before us, and set us the example !

Some extracts from *Bishop Wilson*, another of Dr. M.’s authorities, have been given in a note upon a former chapter.*

I add only the following sentence from the work, to which I have acknowledged myself indebted for many of these extracts. ‘ It is almost unnecessary for us to remark, that it is *usual* with our old divines to speak of bad Christians as being *unregenerate* men : frequent instances of this occur in the writings of Dr. Jackson, Dr Hammond, Bishop Hall, Bishop Sanderson, and many other divines.’†

* See Appendix, Note VIII.

† Christian Observer, 1804, p. 566.—See also Appendix, Note XXIII.

IV. THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.—My proposition is, that neither has this society, in the works which it has circulated, been at all accustomed to restrict regeneration to any thing, which takes place at baptism. To ascertain the fact, I have looked into no more than three of its tracts, each of which decisively proves my assertion.

The first is the ‘Directions for a devout and decent ‘behaviour in the public worship of God,’ which, it has been already observed, point out the collect for Christmas-day as ‘a Prayer for Regeneration:’ directly contrary to Dr. M.’s principle, that we are not to be ‘instructed to ‘pray after baptism for regeneration.’ This at least, was the case, if I mistake not, with all editions of the tract up to the year 1812.*

The next is, ‘An account of the beginnings and advances ‘of a spiritual life,’ which, though written by another hand, has always accompanied Scougal’s ‘Life of God in ‘the soul of man.’ The two works were first introduced to the world by Bishop Burnet, who wrote a preface to them. My quotations are from ‘the fourteenth edition, ‘carefully corrected,’ and published by the society in 1801. In this tract, we find much concerning ‘*converted*’ men, ‘the beginnings of *conversion*,’ ‘first *awakenings*,’ ‘the inward *leadings* of God’s Spirit, *perceived* by us,’ and other matter, which might have been thought very enthusiastic, had it proceeded from a less unquestionable source than the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge. But, besides this, one section is expressly entitled, ‘THE BEGINNINGS OF REGENERATION.’ Nor does this, or, as far

* The history of the change may be seen, Christ. Ob. 1814, p. 293.
 ‘The objection rested on the words’ containing false doctrine, since we
 ‘were regenerated in baptism only,’

as I have observed, any contiguous part of the book, make even an allusion to baptism ! On the contrary, the author, having shewn ‘ the state of most young persons,’ that too many of them ‘ will not let ’ themselves ‘ think seriously, ‘ lest the impressions of ’ their ‘ education return upon ’ them : and others have ‘ nothing to think of, having never ‘ had a right scheme of religion set before ’ them : proceeds as follows : ‘ But when God hath a purpose of love towards ‘ any such, as are either lost in *vice*, or ruined in an insensible *neglect* of God and divine things, he usually begins ‘ to deal with them upon great and sudden emergencies, by ‘ a sickness, some great and outward trouble, or the loss of ‘ a dear friend, which have brought on melancholy ; and ‘ perhaps sometimes upon the commission of some great ‘ sin, that fills the conscience with horror : any of these ‘ cases meeting with some serious good sermon, or the ‘ converse of a sincerely pious and affectionately devout ‘ person, or the reading of some good book, will often ‘ occasion a great excitation of mind, to consider the condition and danger such a person is in ; and though I deny ‘ not but some are insensibly, and, by degrees, slowly ‘ wrought to a change of heart and life, (and indeed there ‘ are no rules to be given to the Almighty,) yet commonly ‘ the change is notable in the first beginning ; a horror for ‘ past sins, and sad apprehensions of the judgments of ‘ God usually break in first.’

On this ‘ *horror for past sins* ’ the next section is employed : and the author judiciously observes, ‘ that none ‘ are to measure their first REGENERATION, either by the ‘ vehemence or by the continuance of their sorrow, but by ‘ the effects it produceth.’

And again, in a subsequent section, (p. 130,) he says, ‘ God does very often meet young *converts* with *sensible joy* ‘ in his ways . . . and thus generally there is a strong fervour about *the beginning of* REGENERATION.

Now surely, it is not for a society which has been, through a century past, thus teaching us to preach REGENERATION to baptized persons, and to professed Christians a CONVERSION in many cases SENSIBLE, now to turn round, and, through the medium of a book, which it has newly taken up, to charge us with 'heresy,' and I know not what 'irreconcilable opposition to the unequivocal and 'numerous declarations' of the church to which we belong; merely because we have taught in conformity with the instructions which it had itself given us! and, I must say, have not often taught in language less measured than is found in some parts of these extracts!

Were we disposed to retaliate, here is full scope for the application of the resolve,

Dixerit insanum qui me, totidem audiet, atque
Respicere ignoto discet pendentia tergo.*

The last tract, to which I appeal, is 'A Discourse concerning baptismal and spiritual Regeneration: by Samuel Bradford, D. D, then Rector of St. Mary-le-bow, London; and afterwards Lord Bishop of Rochester.' The text is Titus iii. 4—7, a passage which has already engaged our attention. My copy is of the seventh edition, printed for the society in 1810; with the following advertisement prefixed. 'This seventh edition is published at a time, when it is hoped, that so judicious and scriptural a discourse may be of service to settle the minds of good Christians, in some present disputes concerning *baptismal* and *spiritual* regeneration.'

Let us then hear the doctrine of this 'judicious and scriptural discourse, for the settling of *our* minds respecting the present dispute.' The fourth general head is

* He that calls me *fanatic* shall hear as good in return, and be taught to consider what hangs unobserved upon his own back!

announced in these words: ‘To shew that *the washing of regeneration* may be separated from *the renewing of the Holy Ghost*; and that if it be so, the end for which it is used, namely, our *salvation*, cannot be obtained; the latter being absolutely necessary in order to our being *saved*, in the complete sense of that word.’

Now I am well aware, that Dr. M. will be ready with the demand, ‘What is there in this contrary to my doctrine? I contend, indeed, that spiritual regeneration takes place exclusively at baptism; but I distinctly admit, that the subsequent “renewing of the Holy Ghost” is necessary to the attainment of salvation.’ And thus, it may be thought, that the whole of what is to be adduced from this discourse is obviated. But such is by no means the case. For, though Dr. M. makes a broad distinction between spiritual regeneration and “the renewing of the Holy Ghost,” Bishop Bradford is to be added to the number of those divines, who do no such thing. He interprets his text precisely as I have proposed to do, and not as Dr. M. does. He considers the two clauses, “the washing of regeneration,” and “the renewing of the Holy Ghost,” as ‘exactly correspondent’ to our Lord’s expression “born of water and of the Spirit;” * and accordingly refers the former to ‘the outward and visible sign of baptism,’ and the latter to ‘the inward and spiritual grace.’ With him, therefore, “the renewing of the Holy Ghost” and ‘spiritual regeneration’ are precisely the same thing. †

* P. 10, 11, and see above, p. 30. So likewise Bp. Beveridge on this text. ‘By the washing with water as the sign of our regeneration, and by *the renewing of the Holy Ghost as the thing signified.*’ Works, vol. i. p. 304.

† Not further to encumber my text, I throw the following proofs of this into a note.

Page 11, he says, that in John iii. 3, 5, ‘born, and born again, plainly answer to *regeneration* in his text, as *water* and *the Spirit* answer to

This being established, let us return to the fourth head of the Bishop's discourse. The express object of it is to show, 'that the washing of regeneration may be separated 'from the renewing of the Holy Ghost;' that is, as we have proved, that baptism may be separated from spiritual regeneration. Let it be observed, that his lordship does not merely drop a casual expression or two of this tendency, but that he sets himself to prove it, as a distinct proposition, and founds upon it a whole head of his sermon. He elsewhere thus expresses his meaning: 'that external 'regeneration, *if not accompanied with the internal*, will 'not avail us to the end for which it is designed.'* And, in confirming his proposition, he reasons thus: Though the apostles speak of 'the visible members of the church of 'Christ under such appellations and expressions as may 'seem at first hearing to imply, that they are all of them 'truly righteous and holy persons,' yet 'it is too evident, 'from divers passages in their writings, and experience has 'confirmed to us the same thing, that both in their times 'and ever since, there have been many who have enjoyed

'the *washing of regeneration*, and the *renewing of the Holy Ghost*.' "Born of the Spirit" is, therefore, being "renewed by the Holy "Ghost."

Again, in the same page, '*Regeneration* . . . is frequently applied to '*baptism*;' it also "particularly denotes *the renewing of the mind by 'the divine Spirit*.'

P. 22, 23. He defines "*the renewing of the Holy Ghost*" "an alteration of the temper of our spirit, effected by the power of the divine 'Spirit.' It is the same, he says, with "giving men a new heart and "a new Spirit: with "God's putting his Spirit within them, and causing "them to walk in his statutes:" with "being spiritually minded," and "transformed by the renewing of the mind:" with putting on the new "man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him who created him." And then, having quoted these and some other scriptures, he adds: 'Finally, this is what our Lord himself means, in his discourse 'with Nicodemus, by *being born of the Spirit*, as well as of *water*.'

* P. 11.

‘ *the washing of regeneration*, whose tempers and manners have demonstrated that they were not also renewed by the ‘ Holy Ghost,’ that is, in his sense of the words, were not “ born again of the Spirit.” ‘ Simon Magus,’ he adds, ‘ was a notorious instance to this purpose; who, though the text tells us that *he believed and was baptized*; yet was soon after told by St. Peter, that *he had neither part nor lot in that matter*; namely, the gift of the Holy Ghost,’* &c.

Exactly after the manner of our church articles, but in a style very different from that of Dr. M., he insists upon ‘ the right *use*,’ and not merely the right administration of the sacraments, in order to their proper effect. Baptism ‘ becomes to us a means whereby we are saved,’ as for other reasons, so ‘ as it is, *in the right use of it*, a means of ‘ obtaining those blessings which it represents.’† And again, ‘ All the institutions of Christianity are represented as so many means, in the use of which the divine Spirit will be ‘ certainly communicated, *if we use them aright*: which is ‘ the true reason,’ he adds, ‘ why baptism and the gift of ‘ the Spirit are so frequently joined together, *as if they were inseparable*, as here in my text,’ in John. iii. and in Acts ii. 38, 39. ‡ ‘ *As if they were inseparable*,’ he says, evidently implying that they are not really so.

‘ Nor can it be otherwise conceived,’ he observes again; ‘ that God should accept of men only upon account of their ‘ having complied with some external and ritual institutions, whilst they had *no regard to the design of them*. ‘ The institutions of Christ do not work like charms: but, ‘ being appointed to be used by reasonable creatures, there ‘ is a *disposition of mind* in the person using them, necessary to the rendering them effectual.’ §

Under the fifth and last head of his discourse, he proceeds,

* P. 37, 38.

† P. 13, 14.

‡ P. 19.

§ P. 39.

therefore, ‘to inquire, How those persons, who have had ‘*the washing of regeneration*, but are not yet *renewed by the Holy Ghost*, may attain to this renovation:’ that is, according to what we have demonstrated to be, in his view of things, synonymous language, How they who have received ‘external regeneration,’ but are strangers to ‘the internal,’ may become ‘spiritually regenerate.’ And this he does, because he says, ‘it is to be feared, nay, it is evident, that ‘many’ are in this case.*

We have here, then, a spectacle presented to us, which demands the very serious consideration of the members of the society at large, and of the heads of our church in particular. Up to the year 1810, or 1812, and perhaps later, the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge circulates throughout the kingdom, under the high sanction of its patronage, works which teach us, that baptism is by no means inseparably connected with spiritual regeneration; which admonish us, therefore, notwithstanding our baptism, to look to ourselves, lest, after all, we be not “born again of “the Spirit,” and ‘to pray for regeneration;’ which describe to us ‘the beginnings of regeneration and conversion,’ and point out to us how we are to proceed in order to obtain spiritual regeneration, if we be yet strangers to it:—the society circulates tracts containing these sentiments, as ‘judicious and scriptural,’ and suited, in the year 1810, to ‘settle the minds of good Christians in some present ‘disputes concerning *baptismal* and *spiritual* regeneration;’ and then, in 1815, it adopts and circulates, under the same authority, tracts which teach, that ‘by baptism exclusively’ is spiritual regeneration conveyed; that ‘no other than ‘baptismal regeneration is possible in this world;’ that to suppose baptism separated from spiritual regeneration is

* P. 41, 43.

‘ to strip it of its sacramental character,’ to deny its inward and spiritual grace,—is ‘ heresy ’—is, ‘ in some sense, doing ‘ despite to the Spirit of grace ! ’ Surely there is much here to *unsettle* ‘ the minds of good Christians ! ’ Surely, I cannot but add, there must be some great mismanagement at the helm ! Can one forbear saying, Here is a noble vessel, ample in her dimensions, firmly built, well found with all manner of stores, capable of great service : to whom is it owing, that she has been left thus to float to and fro on the face of the deep, without a certain destination.*

* See Note XXIV. at the end.

CHAPTER XI.

That, by Dr. Mant's own concession, every adult person, 'receiving baptism rightly,' is regenerate before he is baptized.

DR. M. admits, that being "born of God" is the same thing as being "regenerated."* On the ground of this admission, which, indeed, seems to be unavoidable, I undertake to prove the proposition at the head of this chapter: and that, independently of any peculiar notions which I may be supposed to entertain of regeneration. And my proof is very short and simple. It is as follows.

We are justly taught by our church, that, in order to the right reception of baptism, by a person come to years of discretion, repentance and faith are necessary. †

Now St. John assures us, (1 Ep. v. 1.) that "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born," *γεννηται*, *has been born*, "of God."

Hence it inevitably follows, that every grown person who, 'by faith and rightly, receives' baptism, has been previously "born of God," or regenerated. He must have been so, before that faith could exist in his mind, without which baptism could not be rightly received. ‡

Nor is this taking an unfair advantage of a casual expression. Indeed I can form no idea of casual, or, in other

* P. 35, 44.

† See Catechism, and Art. xxv. xxvi. xxvii. and compare Mark xvi. 16. Acts ii. 38. viii. 37, &c. &c.

‡ See Appendix, Note XXV.

words, of incautious expressions in inspired writings.* But independently of that consideration, I take it to be the general and established doctrine of scripture, that true faith is, in all cases, *the effect* of the regenerating influence of the Spirit of God upon the mind.

And accordingly it will have been observed, that many of the eminent writers, quoted in the foregoing chapter, expressly admit the priority of regeneration to baptism, at least in its commencement: and, in particular, the great champion of our church avows, both that a man may ‘ receive grace *before* baptism,’ and that ‘ it is on all parts ‘ gladly confessed, that there may be in divers cases life by ‘ virtue of inward baptism, even where outward is not ‘ found.’ †

But if spiritual regeneration have, in many cases, commenced, at least, before baptism, how is it pretended, that ‘ by baptism exclusively ’ is regeneration conveyed, and that ‘ no other than baptismal regeneration is possible in ‘ this world ? ’

I claim no merit of novelty for this argument. It has been often urged before ; and I shall here repeat it from a work to which frequent reference has been already made.

‘ *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God ; and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.* Now if every true believer ‘ in Christ has been born of God, and if none, as adults, ‘ are properly *admissible* to baptism, except those who pro-

* It is a valuable observation of Dr. Doddridge’s on our Saviour’s argument from David, by the Holy Ghost, calling the Messiah *his Lord*, that he ‘ always takes it for granted, in his arguments with the Jews, ‘ that the writers of the Old Testament were under such an extraordinary guidance of the Holy Spirit as to *express themselves with the ‘ strictest propriety on all occasions.*’ On Matt. ix. 45.

† Eccles. Pol. b. v. § 60. Vol. ii. p. 247, 250, Oxf. Ed.—See further authorities, Appendix, Note XXV.

‘fess faith in Christ; and none, as adults, *receive* baptism
 ‘aright, except true believers; then it inevitably follows,
 ‘that all’ such persons ‘in the primitive church, and all
 ‘in every age, who rightly have received baptism, have
 ‘been previously born of God. *He that believeth, and is*
 ‘*baptized, shall be saved.—What doth hinder me to be bap-*
 ‘*tized? If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest :*
 ‘*and he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the*
 ‘*son of God :—and he baptized him.* Is it not clear, from
 ‘the apostle’s assertion, *Every one that believeth that Jesus*
 ‘*is the Christ, has been born of God*, that regeneration
 ‘preceded baptism, in respect of this Ethiopian? And is
 ‘it not equally clear, that it does so, in the case of all,
 ‘who receive baptism, on a sincere profession of faith in
 ‘the Lord Jesus? How then can baptism be regeneration;
 ‘or be uniformly connected with it? ’*

* Scott’s Remarks, &c. vol. i. p. 199.

CHAPTER XII.

On the importance of the question at issue, and the practical tendency of Dr. Mant's doctrine.—The author's conclusions concerning the effect of baptism.

CONSIDERING how far Dr. M. sometimes carries his concessions, concerning 'the privileges of the new birth 'being forfeited' by those who do not 'grow up in faith and obedience;'* and concerning the necessity of a change of heart and character in 'every one who is satisfied with mere nominal Christianity, or with any thing 'short of true Christian holiness of heart and life;'+ some may be ready to conclude, that we are at issue chiefly about the meaning and use of a word. I cannot, however, admit that this is the case; nor will Dr. M. himself admit it. ‡

We have seen that he considers all, to whom baptism is 'rightly administered,' as having 'a new principle put 'into them,' even 'the Spirit of grace,' which 'makes 'them heirs of salvation,' and 'entitles them to eternal 'life.' And he is so far, at least, a believer in 'indefectible 'grace,' as to hold, that what is thus given can never be withdrawn, and need to be communicated anew;§ though 'the privileges' attached to it may be 'forfeited.'

But this is not all. Simply on the ground of their baptism, he applies, to professed Christians, at large, scriptural terms, expressive, one would imagine, of the highest and most spiritual privileges. He speaks of them, without

* P. 11, 20, 46, 47.

† See p. 48.

‡ P. 60, 65, 22.

§ P. 49.

limitation, as entitled to ‘*be filled with all joy and peace in believing that they partake*’ of the ‘*new birth.*’* He contends, that such language as that of St. Peter, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead;” and that, again, of St. John, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is;” was applied to the ‘immense societies of Christians, scattered throughout the East,’ solely on this ground, that ‘their regeneration was the effect of an ordinance, (baptism,) of which all Christians in general partake.’† Consequently these passages must be applicable to all baptized persons now. He puts into the mouth of a supposed character, of whose moral habits not a word is said by way of qualification, the following language, as what he might without impropriety employ, in describing the views he had been taught to entertain of his own situation: ‘When an infant, I was baptized according to the order of the national church: and the minister pronounced, by her directions, that I was regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and received by our most merciful Father as his own child by adoption. As soon as I was able to learn, I was taught what a great blessing was then conferred upon me; and that by having been admitted to baptism, I had been made the child of God, and had undergone a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness. When I had been sufficiently instructed to be confirmed by the bishop, I heard from him a repetition of the comfortable assurance, that God had vouchsafed

* P. 24.

† P. 35.

‘ to regenerate me by water and the Holy Ghost, and to
 ‘ give me forgiveness of all my sins.* And I have since
 ‘ periodically joined with my brother Christians, in making
 ‘ our grateful acknowledgments to Almighty God, for being
 ‘ regenerate and made his children by adoption and grace.’†
 He goes on to suppose such a person, *concerning whose character, dispositions, and conduct, he has not given a single intimation*, to have been authorized by the church to consider himself as ‘ a Christian,’ ‘ a child of God,’ and ‘ in the way of salvation.’ In another place he also affirms, that to suppose ‘ in every Christian congregation two sorts of people, some that know Christ, and some that do not

* It will be observed, that all this is here rehearsed without one word of the vows and professions which precede it, and are mixed up with it, as it stands in the services of the church. Thus torn from its connection and dependencies, it no longer represents the doctrine of the church, however it may convey Dr. M.’s sentiments.—Can any thing be more direct ANTINOMIANISM than to assure a person ‘ now come to the years of discretion,’ merely on the ground of his baptism, received in infancy, that God ‘ *hath given* him forgiveness of all his sins?’ Not merely *did* forgive him his ‘ original sin ’ at baptism, but *hath* forgiven him all his sins up to the present time! This might be a very ‘ comfortable assurance,’ but is it so certain, that it would be very safe, either to the giver or the receiver?

† P. 49. Dr. M. supposes his imagined character, having been subsequently ‘ seduced from the words of truth and soberness ’ by the preachers of ‘ the modern new birth,’ to proceed: ‘ What can I think of such a church? Can I regard her as a pillar and ground of the truth? Can I reverence her, who so grossly deluded me by a visionary regeneration, and threw an impenetrable veil over that which alone is effectual? who taught me to think that I was in the way of salvation, when I had not yet passed the threshold? who made me believe I was a child of God; when I was still a child of the devil? who treated me as a Christian, when I was nothing but a baptized heathen?’ The answer to be returned to a person, declaiming in this way, is very obvious. It is no other than this: ‘ Sir, you have entirely misunderstood the church, by adopting Dr. Mant’s interpretation of her formularies, instead of studying her articles, her homilies, and the whole of her liturgy taken together.’

‘ know him ; some that are converted, and some that are ‘ strangers to conversion ;’ is ‘ a conceit which revelation ‘ warrants not, and which reason and experience disclaim.’*

Our succeeding chapter (which will be employed on Dr. M.’s second tract, on conversion,) will bring further evidence of this kind before us. But already, I apprehend, enough has been adduced to evince, that it is no mere dispute of words in which we are engaged. With Dr. M. I exclaim, ‘ Far indeed, very far from it !’ † *I take my stand, in this entire argument, as pleading the cause of holiness and practical religion, against an error which threatens the subversion of both.* I contend, if not against “ a faith without “ works,” yet against A REGENERATION WITHOUT EFFECTS. Very seldom, I fear, is the regeneration, of which we now hear so much, seen to exert any salutary influence on the heart and life : ‡ but whether it do or not, men, it seems, are to be taught to place great practical reliance upon it. Yet what can be *more gross antinomianism*, than to rely upon a religious distinction, which is unaccompanied with the purification of the heart and conduct ?

But shall I be told that Dr. M. pleads for no such thing ? With his *intentions* I have nothing to do : but for what he has in fact done, I appeal to all which I have just cited from him. He authorizes a man, merely on the ground of his baptism, and without a single supposition inserted concerning his present conduct, to consider himself as ‘ having been made a ‘ child of God, and having undergone a death unto sin, ‘ and a new birth unto righteousness :’ as ‘ having heard ‘ the comfortable assurance, that God had vouchsafed to regenerate him by water and the Holy Ghost, and to give ‘ him forgiveness of all his sins :’ and as warranted to ‘ be ‘ filled with all joy and peace in believing that he partakes’

* P. 60, 61, 63.

† P. 48.

‡ ‘ We admit the fact,’ Archdeacon Daubeny here says, ‘ and lament ‘ it.’

of that change, 'of which our Saviour speaks in such lofty 'language' in the third chapter of St. John. And I cannot consider his doctrine otherwise than as having a strong and direct tendency, to encourage men to take all this 'comfortable assurance' to themselves, not hypothetically,—certain suppositions being made concerning their character and conduct,—as our church allows them to do, but unconditionally and unreservedly.

I appeal, yet further, to other passages of his work. Baptismal regeneration, he says, 'makes us heirs of salvation,' and 'entitles us to eternal life.' 'We argue for 'baptism being the vehicle of regeneration, BECAUSE IT IS 'THE VEHICLE OF SALVATION.'* Not only so: without one exception or limitation, he says of baptism, 'ordained 'as it was by Christ himself, WITH A PROMISE OF SALVATION ANNEXED TO ITS LEGITIMATE ADMINISTRATION.'† Christ's promises are all sure, and indubitably true: not one of them shall fail of being fulfilled in its season. If, therefore, he has 'annexed a promise of salvation,' (which is not merely the commencement, but the great and final consummation of our hopes,) to the 'legitimate administration of baptism,' then all who have been 'legitimately baptized' must infallibly be saved.—I know that Dr. M. does not own such a conclusion:‡ but will not his words teach men to draw it? and does it not unavoidably follow from them?—One would surely have thought it impossible, for a learned protestant divine, in the nineteenth century, delivering theological lectures in one of the first universities in Christendom, to use language, so unmeasured, and so unwarrantable! and still more so, for a society, which may almost boast itself The Society of the Church of England, to adopt the lecture, and circulate it

* P. 35.

† P. 51.

‡ P. 21.

through the kingdom, 'to convey correct notions' to 'the community at large!'

To treat the subject with unmixed seriousness. Should such doctrines as these come to be prevalent; should they be at all generally heard from our pulpits; should they be embraced by 'the community at large;' it would be in vain for us to think of counteracting THEIR ANTINOMIAN TENDENCY, by a few cautions against forfeiting 'the privileges' of that regenerate state, which, it would appear, is itself so irrevocable, that no further regeneration is 'necessary, or expedient, or possible.'† A speculative man may try to persuade himself that Dr. M.'s restrictions of this kind render his doctrine harmless; but the great practical question is, How will it impress the mass of 'the community,' among whom it is to be disseminated? For a time his cautions and limitations may seem to bear some tolerable proportion to his broad positions of a contrary nature: because the former fall in with all that we have been used to, and with the suggestions of that conscience, which God has implanted in the breast of man: while we hesitate at the latter as novel, and almost incredible; and conclude that they are to be received in a qualified sense, even where it is not so expressed. There may have been health enough infused into the constitution from other sources, to enable it to resist the poison for a time. But, in the lapse of a few years, if such instructions become common, the case will be altered. The cautions and limitations will gradually fall into oblivion, while the broad assertions, and obvious but dangerous inferences from them, may be expected to fix

* It is to be recollected, that seldom can those persons, who occupy high stations in such societies, take a very active part in the proceedings. Generally the business is transacted by a few individuals, who happen to be on the spot.

† Mant, p. 49.

themselves in the memory, to become principles in the heart, to govern the life, and, consequently, to ruin the soul!

And it is not only from Dr. M.'s writings that such danger is to be apprehended. In another work, to give all possible effect to which no pains have been spared, we meet with such statements as follow: 'Those who are baptized are immediately translated from the curse of Adam to the grace of Christ; the original guilt which they brought into the world is mystically washed away; and they receive forgiveness of the actual sins which they may themselves have committed; they become reconciled to God, partakers of the Holy Ghost, and heirs of eternal happiness; they acquire a new name, a new hope, a new faith, a new rule of life. This great and wonderful change in the condition of man is as it were a new nature, a new state of existence; and the holy rite, by which these invaluable blessings are communicated, is by St. Paul figuratively called *regeneration*, or new-birth. Many similar phrases occur in the New Testament, such as *born of water and of the Spirit; begotten again unto a lively hope; dead in sins, and quickened together with Christ; buried with Christ in baptism; born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible*: these expressions ALL RELATE to a single act once performed upon EVERY individual—an act essential to the character of a Christian, and of such importance, that it is declared to be instrumental to our salvation.'*

What is the tendency of such doctrine as this? What; but to reduce the scriptures to a mere *caput mortuum*,—a dead, inefficient mass? to strip them of whatever in their contents was most suited to arrest the attention, to awaken

* Refutation of Calvinism, p. 33, 34.

the conscience, to interest the feelings, to stimulate the hopes and fears of mankind. Not one important passage only,* but numberless passages, which the Christian world has been used to consider as most solemnly descriptive of the character and condition of those, who are in the way to be saved, as contradistinguished to those who are yet “dead in their sins,” are henceforth, it seems, to be understood of nothing but what is common to us all ! They ‘ALL RELATE to a single act once performed upon every individual,’ namely, at his baptism !

All these high things, be it observed, are said to be effected not only upon infants, when they are baptized, but upon *any* person receiving baptism ; as is manifest (if proof were necessary,) from the clause, ‘they receive forgiveness of the *actual* sins which they may themselves have committed.’ Yet not a word is said of the necessity of ‘repentance and faith’ accompanying the reception of this sacrament !

But how is it possible, that the promulgators of such doctrines can fail to be struck with a consideration of the following kind ? In the country, in which we live, though the great majority are baptized in their infancy, yet there is a competent number of persons who are not. We have many quakers, and many anti-pædobaptists among us, whose children uniformly grow up without baptism. Now as baptism makes so ‘great and wonderful a change’ in those who receive it, that they ‘are immediately translated from the curse of Adam to the grace of Christ ; . . . become reconciled to God, partakers of the Holy Ghost, and heirs of eternal happiness ; acquire a new name, a new hope, a new faith, a new rule of life,’ nay ‘a new nature, a new state of existence :’ we may naturally expect to trace a

* John iii.

striking practical difference, as they grow up, between the mass of those young persons who have been baptized in their infancy, and those who have not. We may expect to see the former class, if not uniformly, yet very commonly, make it manifest, by the virtues of "the new man," that they are in 'the grace of Christ, partakers of the Holy 'Ghost,' possessed of 'a new nature, heirs of eternal happiness.' The latter, (awful spectacle!) it may be anticipated, will uniformly, or almost uniformly, shew themselves, by the prevalence of wicked tempers and habits, to be under 'the curse, unreconciled to God,' destitute of 'the Holy Spirit,' and of 'the hope, the faith, the new 'state of existence,' which characterize the others.

But now, in point of fact, is any such striking difference of character to be generally or frequently traced between our children, who are baptized, and those children of dissenters, who grow up without baptism? Does any marked distinction between them appear, which we are warranted to ascribe to the enjoyment of baptism among one party, or the want of it in the other? Or is it consistent with the avowed principles of scripture to believe, that, among a number of persons, some are "children of wrath," and the others 'children of grace,' and 'heirs of eternal happiness,' while no perceptible difference can be pointed out in their spirit and character? Is this agreeable to the maxim, "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, "nor uncircumcision, but a new creature,"—but "faith "which worketh by love?" Is this exhibiting God as "no respecter of persons?" Or rather is not this falling precisely into the errors which proved fatal to the Jews? *

* The observation may possibly have reached Dr. M.'s ears, that his doctrine respecting one sacrament a good deal resembles that of the papists respecting the other, or indeed respecting both. And the grounds of this observation may now appear. They are twofold. First, as transubstantiation requires us to believe contrary to the evidence of our

To extinguish all true and spiritual * religion amongst us; to reduce Christianity to a system of external distinctions: and to substitute for its humble, holy, vital spirit, that compound of self-righteous pride and antinomian licentiousness, which characterized the Jewish church, in its last and worst days; is, to my apprehension, the direct tendency of such doctrines as we are contemplating.

The Jewish church,—let me impress the sentiment upon the members of an establishment, whose welfare I have deeply at heart,—the Jewish church stands a beacon to warn us against the fatal tendency of a false confidence, like that which these doctrines tend to generate in us. The Jews were ever ready to exclaim, “The temple of the Lord,

senses, so this doctrine, concerning ‘the great and wonderful change’ produced in the very ‘nature’ of those who are baptized, requires us to believe contrary to *experience*: and in both cases, the demand seems to be made upon us equally without authority of scripture. Take two pieces of the wafer, the one consecrated, the other not. Examine them: you find no difference: yet you are to believe that one is bread, the other flesh and blood! In like manner, take two young persons, one baptized, the other not: you catechize, and you observe them: you find, it is very likely, no difference in their knowledge, their spirit, their conduct: yet you are to believe the one ‘transferred from the curse of Adam to the ‘grace of Christ—reconciled to God—of a new nature;’ for he is baptized: the other, the reverse of all this; for he is unbaptized!—The second ground is, that, if this doctrine be thoroughly received, we, who bear the priestly office, certainly need not despair of regaining that supreme influence, which was possessed by our predecessors, before their power to open or shut the kingdom of heaven at pleasure, by giving or withholding the sacraments, fell into discredit.

It is, further, natural to remark, that, if it be in the power of baptism to do so much for us, as the last and some other quotations represent, it is surely to be regretted that the practice, once prevalent, has not been retained, of deferring baptism till the very article of death, that the receiver of such inestimable benefits may not be allowed the opportunity of forfeiting them again! See Appendix, Note XXVI.

* John iv. 23, 24.

“ the temple of the Lord ” are we ! ‘ We are the church, the true church of God, his children, and the exclusive heirs of his kingdom ! ’ They confided in being “ the “ descendents of Abraham,” admitted into covenant with God by circumcision, as we are by baptism. In this confidence they esteemed themselves secure ; and fell into the neglect of that “ righteousness and true holiness,” to which all their privileges and distinctions were intended to lead them.

Against such false confidence their prophets of old had frequently warned them. But when the forerunner of the Messiah, and when, shortly after, the Messiah himself and his apostles appeared, they, with united voice, exerted all their energies against it. “ Repent ye,” they exclaimed, “ for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Bring forth fruits “ meet for repentance, and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father ; for I say unto you, that God is able even of these stones to raise up “ children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid “ unto the root of the trees ; therefore every tree which “ bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into “ the fire.” “ There cometh one after me,” cried the holy Baptist, “ who is mightier than I, whose fan is in his “ hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather “ the wheat into his garner, but he will burn up the chaff “ with unquenchable fire.” “ I say unto you,” proclaimed our blessed Lord himself, “ that many shall come from the “ east, and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and “ Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven : but THE “ CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM ”—those who arrogated to themselves this character, while strangers to the dispositions and conduct which might justify their pretensions—“ shall “ be cast into outer darkness : there shall be weeping and “ gnashing of teeth.” *

The discourse to Nicodemus is in the same strain. In

* See Matt. iii. and viii.

opposition to the Jewish confidence in a lineal descent from Abraham, it declares, that Jews as well as gentiles must be "born again," or they could never see the kingdom of God.

And, to name no more, St. Paul, in the epistle to the Romans, lays down the principle, that "*not all are Israel which are of Israel:*" and proclaims, in language, to which we have on a former occasion bespoken attention, "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." * And, as he had lived to witness the fatal consequences of his countrymen's neglecting all the warnings which had been given them, and persisting in their errors, to the rejection of him who would have redeemed them, he most passionately deploras the event, declaring himself ready to have endured any evils which might have been a means of preventing it.

Far be it from me to insinuate that Dr. M. would willingly produce a false confidence, and an unrighteousness of life, like those of the Jews: I believe the very contrary: and I forget not the cautions which he puts in against such a construction. But I am not concerned with his intentions, but, in the first place, with the foundation which there may be for his doctrine in scripture; and, that having been shewn to be none at all, with its tendency, and the practical effects which are likely to flow from its prevalence amongst us: and these I do solemnly apprehend to be of the worst possible kind. †

BEFORE we finally quit the consideration of baptism and its effects, it may, perhaps, be expected, that I should state,

* Rom. ii. ix. &c.

† See Appendix, Note XXVII.

what is the result of my inquiries, and what the conclusions I come to upon the subject. And this I will do for my own satisfaction, as well as that of the reader.

With respect to persons come to years of discretion,

1. I fully concur with Bishop Burnet, that the external act of baptism, apart from right dispositions in the receiver, does no more than admit to external privileges. God *may*, indeed, make the administration of baptism the means of “ quickening the soul,” that came to it “ dead in trespasses and sins :” but this is a more *sudden conversion* than we are in ordinary cases warranted to expect.

2. In those who ‘ receive baptism rightly,’ I believe, with our twenty-seventh article, the inward blessing communicated to them to be ‘ the confirmation of faith, and ‘ increase of grace’ already received. Regeneration, if confined to the sense of the *first* infusion of ‘ a new ‘ principle of life and of action,’* or, as Hooker’s words are, ‘ the first disposition towards future newness of life,’ cannot be received by these persons in baptism, for they already have it before they are baptized. They are partakers of ‘ repentance and faith,’ and consequently possess the grace of God before they come. All they need is, to have these spiritual graces confirmed and increased :’ which they may confidently expect in this sacrament, ‘ by virtue ‘ of prayer unto God.’

And with this latitude it is both natural and necessary to understand ‘ the death unto sin and new birth unto righteousness,’ mentioned in the catechism as ‘ the inward and spiritual grace’ of which baptism is ‘ a means,’ as well as ‘ a sign and a pledge.’ There is no need to confine the terms to the very first communication of grace to the soul :† and to suppose them so confined in this place, would be to contradict both the article, which assumes ‘ grace’ to have

* Mant.

† See Appendix, Note II.

been previously given; and the preceding sentences of the catechism, which require ‘repentance and faith’ in persons to be baptized.—Accordingly the exhortation after baptism inculcates, as a duty *incumbent throughout life*, upon all of ‘us who are baptized,’ this very thing which the catechism describes as ‘the inward and spiritual grace of baptism,’ that we should ‘die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness.’

I add, further, that, as the article most properly states, persons receiving baptism rightly have ‘the promises of forgiveness of sin, and of their adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, thereby visibly *signed* and *sealed* :’ all which must greatly conduce to their comfort and the confirmation of their faith.—As internal sanctification is the real seal and attestation of our acceptance with God; so baptism, which represents sanctification, is the outward and visible attestation of it, which is given by the church, and ratified in heaven when given to a proper subject.*

3. With respect to infants: baptism admits them into the visible church, and so far is certainly a relative sanctification or regeneration of them. But, as to their regeneration in a higher sense of the word, this, like that of adults, can be declared of them only hypothetically. In the one case, sincerity in the professions made, and, in the other, the anticipated fulfilment of their baptismal vows, as they become capable of fulfilling them, must be assumed, as the basis of the declaration. The event of their conduct must determine, both in one case and the other, whether the persons baptized have received ‘the sanctification of the

* So, under the old dispensation, circumcision *represented* the mortification of sin, or sanctification; but it was “the *seal* of the righteousness of faith,” that is, of justification. Rom. iv. 11.

The xxviii of our Church Articles treats the whole subject in a very explicit and accurate manner. See *Appendix, Note XXVIII.*

‘ Spirit ’—‘ a new principle of life and of action ’—or not.*

I have occasionally spoken not merely of the fulfilment of their baptismal vows being expected and anticipated, but of a *disposition*, which shall lead them, as they become competent to do it, to fulfil those vows, being even now *supposed* to exist in infants, when they are pronounced regenerate. That they are capable, even in infancy, of receiving from almighty God such a disposition, seems to me as clear, as that they may and do, by nature, possess a contrary disposition. And that he may be mercifully pleased, in many instances, to communicate such grace, especially to the children of pious parents, presented to baptism with devout and fervent prayers, I can readily hope and believe.†

If, after all, any persons complain, that I reduce the effect of baptism to narrow limits, as to the most of those to whom the ordinance is administered: I reply, that their thinking so may possibly be to be ascribed to their having entertained unreasonably high ideas of the efficacy of this sacrament—much higher, probably, than they entertain of the efficacy of the other sacrament. I refer them, also, to the beginning of the third chapter of the epistle to the Romans, where the apostle answers the same objection brought against his doctrine concerning circumcision. And I caution every one against reputing it a small privilege, to have been ‘ called to a state of salvation,’ by being received into the visible church of Christ; placed under Christian

* The apostle’s language, Heb. iii. 14, is remarkable, and to our present purpose, “ We *are* made,” or “ *have been* made, partakers of Christ, *if we hold fast* the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.” Either they had, or they had not, been “ made partakers of Christ ” even now, but it is referred to *the event* to decide which was the case. So the fulfilment of our vows can alone prove that we have received the inward and spiritual grace of baptism.

* See Appendix, Note XXIX.

instruction; numbered among those “to whom the oracles
 “of God are committed,”* and addressed, on whom all
 Christian duties are binding, and to whom all Christian
 privileges are specially offered. ‘Whosoever,’ says Bishop
 Hopkins, ‘are partakers of baptism are reckoned visible
 ‘members of the church, and have an interest in all the
 ‘prayers of the saints, for their brethren on earth. And
 ‘this ought, by every sober Christian, to be esteemed a
 ‘great benefit, that his children, by their being baptized,
 ‘are wrapt up in the prayers of all the saints throughout
 ‘the world, and so daily presented to God, though to them
 ‘unknown.’

I add the following remarks from works already before
 the public, without venturing to pronounce any very confi-
 dent opinion on the point to which they relate.

‘A large proportion’ of the clergy called evangelical
 ‘do suppose, that some special gracious effect attends the
 ‘due administration of infant-baptism,’† beyond the mere
 admission of the children to the privileges of church-mem-
 bership.

‘This is certainly our own sentiment: We find no dif-
 ‘ficulty whatever, in considering the baptismal rite as an
 ‘assurance and pledge, on the part of God, that the
 ‘person hereby admitted into personal covenant with him
 ‘through the second Adam, shall not perish through the
 ‘fault of the first.’‡

* “What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of
 “circumcision? Much every way: *chiefly because that unto them were*
 “*committed the oracles of God.*” Rom. iii. 1, 2.

So again it was represented as a great privilege of the Jews, that
 they were “the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which
 “God made with their fathers, saying unto Abraham,” &c: though it
 was not supposed that they were, without their own personal repen-
 tance and faith, interested in the spiritual blessings of that covenant.
 Acts iii. 25.

† Scott’s Remarks, &c. vol. ii. p. 212.

‡ Christian Observer, 1812, p. 370.—See Appendix, Note XXX.

CHAPTER XIII.

On Dr. Mant's second Tract, on Conversion.

OF Dr. M.'s second tract a much more cursory notice may be sufficient. He here pretty clearly marks the distinction between the several parties on whom he animadverts: and a large proportion of his tract is employed on extravagancies, with which I have no concern but to deplore them.

Justice, however, would seem to require, that, while the faults and errors of men, who, like Whitefield and Wesley, effected great good, though they have produced also much evil, were exposed, some notice should be taken of their public acknowledgments of those errors and faults. As this has not been done by Dr. M., I shall transcribe a few sentences upon the subject, from a work, to which no candid person, who has a competent acquaintance with its contents, will refuse to listen on this occasion.

‘ It is enough briefly to say, that, although the language
 ‘ of Whitefield and Wesley, upon divine communications,
 ‘ occasionally merits the severity of Dr. M.'s censure; yet
 ‘ perhaps some little tenderness might have been shewn to
 ‘ men who had finally and nobly avowed their fault—had
 ‘ confessed that the impressions they had mistaken for di-
 ‘ vine influence, had often “ proceeded from the state and
 ‘ disposition of the body ”—“ were genuine instances of
 ‘ enthusiasm,” were “ vain and blasphemous conceits.”
 ‘ How few men, idolized like Whitefield, would have de-
 ‘ graded themselves to plead guilty in such language as the
 ‘ following: “ I came soon into the world, I have carried

‘ high sail whilst running through a torrent of popularity
 ‘ and contempt, and by this means have sometimes been in
 ‘ danger of oversetting. I know that I am a man of like
 ‘ passions with others, and consequently may have mistaken
 ‘ nature for grace, imagination for revelation, and the fire
 ‘ of my own temper for the pure and sacred flame of holy
 ‘ zeal, which cometh from God’s altar. Alas, alas! in how
 ‘ many things have I acted wrong! I have been too rash
 ‘ and hasty in giving characters both of places and persons.
 ‘ I have too much made impressions, without the written
 ‘ word, my rule of action. Being fond of scripture lan-
 ‘ guage, I have often used a style too apostolical, and at
 ‘ the same time I have been too bitter in my zeal. Wild
 ‘ fire has been mixed with it, and I find I have frequently
 ‘ written and spoken in my own spirit, when I thought I
 ‘ was writing and speaking entirely by the assistance of the
 ‘ Spirit of God.”—Many have been weak enough to trans-
 ‘ gress with Whitefield, but few great enough to offer such
 ‘ an atonement for their faults.’*

And again, with respect to instantaneous conversion, ‘ it
 ‘ would be ungenerous to forget that Wesley and White-
 ‘ field both made a living avowal of their errors also upon
 ‘ this subject—that they made it to thousands, upon whom
 ‘ they might almost have imposed what sentiments they
 ‘ pleased—that they made it in the face of implacable
 ‘ enemies—that they made it amid scenes of unparalleled
 ‘ success, when they sometimes preached to twenty thou-
 ‘ sand auditors, and when one half of these were either
 ‘ dissolved in tears, or otherwise violently agitated. Such
 ‘ an avowal might, in any court of equity, be pleaded, and
 ‘ would be received in mitigation of punishment.’†

Had Dr. M.’s attack, then, been confined to ‘ the found-
 ‘ ers of methodism,’ I had left it to others to repel it. Or

* Christian Observer, 1813, p. 159, 160.

† Ibid. p. 163.

had ‘ sudden and instantaneous conversion ’ been the only thing to which he objected, I had not undertaken its defence, any further than to assert, that, as the day of pentecost, in [ancient times, and, in modern, the case of Colonel Gardiner demonstrates, conversion may be sudden and yet effectual ;* and, likewise, that if conversion be a “ passing from death unto life,” a “ quickening of those “ who were dead in trespasses and sins,” there must be a moment when life commences ; though, perhaps, that moment is as much out of the reach of human discovery with respect to spiritual, as with respect to natural life.

Nor am I disposed to except against what Dr. M. has delivered concerning the *nature* of conversion. In his 65th page, he assents to Mr. Overton’s statement, that it consists in ‘ the actual reformation of the heart and character ; that ‘ the author of this happy change is the Holy Spirit, but ‘ that it is generally effected, and is always to be sought

* Dr. M. seems to concede as much himself, p. 73, 74. He says, ‘ Not that I would be understood to assert, that Providence may not ‘ perhaps, even in the present day, be sometimes pleased to interpose in ‘ a manner more awful and impressive, than is agreeable to the ordinary ‘ course of his proceedings, and to arrest the sinner in his career of infidelity or wickedness, and to turn him from darkness unto light. But it ‘ is the error of enthusiasm to invert the order of God’s proceedings, and ‘ to mistake that for the rule, which in reality constitutes the exception.’ To all this I fully assent.

So also Dr. Paley, in his latter days, very beautifully : ‘ I do not, in ‘ the smallest degree, mean to undervalue, or speak lightly of such changes, ‘ whenever or in whomsoever they take place ; nor to deny, that they ‘ may be sudden, yet lasting ; (nay, I am rather inclined to think, that ‘ it is in this manner that they frequently do take place ;) nor to dispute ‘ what is upon good testimony alleged concerning conversion brought ‘ about by affecting incidents of life ; by striking passages of scripture ; ‘ by impressive discourses from the pulpit ; by what we meet with in books, ‘ or even by single touching sentences, or expressions in such discourses ‘ or books. I am not disposed to question these relations unnecessarily, ‘ but rather to bless God for such instances, when I hear of them, and ‘ to regard them as merciful ordinations of his providence.’

‘ after, in the diligent use of the appointed means of grace :
 ‘ that it is no instantaneous operation, *which finishes the*
 ‘ *whole business of religion at once*, but that it is the serious
 ‘ commencement of a work, which it requires the vigorous
 ‘ exertions of the whole life to complete.’ All this is excellent : nor is Dr. M.’s own description of it materially different. He says, p. 57, ‘ Conversion, according to
 ‘ our notions, may not improperly be said to consist of a
 ‘ rational conviction of sin, and sense of its wretchedness
 ‘ and danger ; of a sincere penitence and sorrow of heart,
 ‘ at having incurred the displeasure of a holy God ; of
 ‘ steadfast purposes of amendment, with the blessing of the
 ‘ divine grace ; of a regular and diligent employment of all
 ‘ the appointed means of grace ; and of a real change of
 ‘ heart and life, of affections and conduct, and a resolute
 ‘ perseverance in well doing.’ This differs not, I think, from the former passage, except it be, that it contains not so explicit a recognition of the Holy Spirit as the author of ‘ the rational conviction of sin,’ ‘ the sincere
 ‘ penitence,’ and ‘ the steadfast purpose of amendment.’ I take it for granted, however, that Dr. M. means it to be understood, that all these ‘ holy desires, good
 ‘ counsels, and just works’ proceed from the operation of God’s Holy Spirit on the mind ; and also that a deep and heart-affecting ‘ conviction of sin,’ such as we see exemplified at the day of pentecost, or in the penitent publican, is no more than is perfectly ‘ rational.’ These things being understood, I am well content that Dr. M.’s description should be received as a just account of conversion.*

And, further, with respect to the proper *subjects* of conversion, he is sometimes pretty liberal in his concessions. In

* It has been justly, however, remarked as singular, that Dr. M. should not have explicitly, at least, included in his definition one of the most important and fundamental of all properties, faith in the Saviour, and reliance on him for the pardon of sin.

the primitive days he allows that ‘universally, both among
 ‘Jews and among gentiles, those who were living under the
 ‘dominion of sin, or were not duly convinced of the neces-
 ‘sity of a Redeemer,’ needed to be ‘converted from their
 ‘errors, whether in principle or in practice.’* And ‘now
 ‘also,’ he says, ‘every unbeliever and every sinner, al-
 ‘though made by baptism a member of Christ and a child
 ‘of God, must be, in a certain sense, converted, if he
 ‘would ultimately succeed to his inheritance of the king-
 ‘dom of heaven.’† And so again, after reciting Mr.
 Overton’s words, as above quoted, he declares, ‘considering
 ‘conversion in this light, I can cheerfully concur with our
 ‘brethren in maintaining the necessity of such a change
 ‘to every one, who is *satisfied with mere nominal Christi-*
 ‘*anity, or with any thing short of true Christian holiness*
 ‘*both of heart and life.*’‡ And yet again he admits, that
 ‘previous habits of irreligion and worldly-mindedness ren-
 ‘der it necessary.’‡ At the same time he is of opinion,
 that we should do better to ‘decline the phraseology of en-
 ‘thusiasm,’ by calling the change ‘*true repentance,*’ rather
 than *conversion*.§ Why he should so speak of the term
conversion, I feel rather at a loss to determine, after having
 read, only a few pages before, his description of ‘conver-
 ‘sion, according to the notions’ entertained of it by him-
 self and his friends: and when, in the interval between the
 two passages, he declares, from the late Bishop Randolph,
 that ‘in scripture we find conversion conjoined with repen-
 ‘tance’ as *one and the same.*’ ||

But now, after all this, what must we think of such sen-
 tences as the following? ‘We are not told in scripture, as
 ‘we are now imperiously called upon, to divide our hearers,
 ‘being believers in Christianity in common, into the classes

* P. 59, 60. † P. 60. ‡ P. 65. § P. 65, 66. || P. 64.

‘ of converted and unconverted.’ ‘ That among men, baptized as Christians, taught from their infancy to believe the doctrines and practice the duties of Christianity, a special conversion also at some period of their life is necessary to stamp them true Christians, is an unheard of thing in the gospel, and is plainly a novel institution of man.’ *

I fear this indicates, that Dr. M.’s objection, like that of too many persons who raise an outcry against ‘ sudden conversions,’ is not merely to the suddenness or extravagance of some professed conversions, but to conversion itself; at least, when represented as a change necessary to turn even those who ‘ profess and call themselves Christians,’ from what they are by nature, to what they must be before they can be fit for heaven.

Here also we see the practical influence of Dr. M.’s views of baptismal regeneration. The change which it has produced in men seems to be thought, of itself, a reason against preaching conversion to them, even though they should have ‘ forfeited their privileges ’ by a sinful life.

But in the last passage much depends upon the meaning of certain terms, which are sufficiently lax and indefinite. What is meant, by ‘ taught from their infancy to believe the doctrines and practise the duties of Christianity ? ’ Does it mean no more than instructed by man that they ought to do so ? or inwardly “ taught ” † and inclined to do it, by the grace of God, accompanying outward instruction ? If the latter, then the persons have been and are converted, and turned from a state of nature to a state of grace. If the former, let all experience as well as scripture declare, whether outward instruction supersedes the necessity of a conversion by divine grace, turning the heart from sin to God.

* P. 63, 64.

† John vi. 45.

Again, what is meant by a ‘special conversion?’ Does it mean a conversion of which the person can distinctly specify the time, the means, the manner, the beginning, and middle, and end? If so, I know none of ‘our self-denominated evangelical brethren,’ who insist upon its necessity. We are happy to believe that there are ‘some humble Christians, who, having been once regenerated by water and the Holy Spirit, have so followed his heavenly motions,’* that, though we should not think of saying of them, somewhat quaintly, and not a little presumptuously, ‘their angels may not blush to behold the face of their heavenly Father;’† yet we often do describe them as persons, whose conversion ‘began so early, and has proceeded so gradually, that it exceeds the power of man precisely to trace its rise and progress.’ But if ‘a special conversion’ mean only a real, a great, a radical, a divine change, then we certainly do maintain, that it has passed, or must pass, upon every man in order to his being a true Christian.*

But whatever ambiguities, leaving an opening for more favourable interpretation, there may be in these sentences, which are borrowed by Dr. M., but borrowed with high commendation, I am sorry to say there appears no such thing in the following passage, for which he alone is answerable. ‘To suppose,’ with Whitefield, “that in every Christian congregation there are two sorts of people, some that know Christ, and some that do not know him, some that are converted, and some that are strangers to conversion;”—this is a conceit which revelation warrants not, and which reason and experience disclaim.’‡

It is really difficult to read this conclusion without exclamations of astonishment. To say nothing of ‘revelation’

* Mant, p. 61.

† Mant, p. 61.

‡ P. 60, 61.

—nothing of our Lord's solemn declaration to the Jews, "Ye say that he is your God, but ye have not *known* him:"—nothing of St. Paul's admonition to the Corinthian church, "Some have not the *knowledge* of God, I speak this to your shame:"—nothing of St. Jolin's rule for trying our 'knowledge of Christ,' "Hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments:"—not to dwell on these, or a thousand other passages of holy writ, I notice only the appeal to 'reason and experience,' which, it is affirmed, 'disclaim' as a vain 'conceit' the supposition, that, 'in every Christian congregation, there are some that are converted, and some that are strangers to conversion.'

Of course Dr. M. does not mean so far to take advantage of the strictness of the term '*every* Christian congregation,' as to point out assemblies of literally "two or three" pious individuals "met together in the name of Christ," as the exceptions. If that were his meaning, he would be contending without an antagonist. He must mean, that, at least, the better sort of Christian congregations ought not to be considered as containing unconverted persons. Restricted beyond this, his censure will have no application.

Take, then, his own descriptions of the characters who need to be converted, 'Every unbeliever and every sinner'—'all those who are living under the dominion of sin'—'those whose previous habits of irreligion and worldly-mindedness render it necessary'—'every one who is satisfied with mere nominal Christianity, or with any thing short of true Christian holiness of heart and life: '*—every such person, 'although made by baptism a member of Christ and a child of God, must be, in a certain sense, converted, if he would ultimately succeed to his inheritance of the kingdom of heaven; † and he (Dr. M.) 'can cheer-

* P. 59, 60, 65.

† P. 60.

‘fully concur in maintaining the necessity of such a change,’ as Mr. Overton describes under the name of conversion, to all these characters.* Yet ‘reason and experience,’ he says, ‘disclaim,’ as an unwarranted ‘conceit,’ the supposition, that ‘our hearers’ are to be divided ‘into the two ‘classes of converted and unconverted!’† Were it not well known, that Dr. M. is ‘Chaplain to his Grace the ‘Archbishop of Canterbury, and Rector of’ a parish in the metropolis, might not one have supposed him a recluse, who had lived all his days immured in a college, and was utterly unacquainted with the state of the Christian world, nay, with all that was passing in the university itself, beyond the precincts of his own rooms? Would it not be natural to suppose this, when we hear him allow, that so many and so comprehensive descriptions of persons need to be converted, and yet reprobate the supposition, that almost all Christian congregations contain ‘persons that are strangers ‘to conversion,’ as well as those that are converted?‡

* P. 65.

† P. 61, 65.

‡ How much more rational, and wise, and right, as well as more scriptural, the following observations of Dr. Paley!—‘Of the persons ‘in our congregations, to whom we not only may, but must preach the ‘doctrine of conversion plainly and directly, are those, who, with ‘the name indeed of Christians, have hitherto passed their lives without ‘any internal religion whatever; who have not at all thought upon the ‘subject; who, a few easy and customary forms excepted, (and which ‘with them are mere forms,) cannot truly say of themselves, that they ‘have done one action, which they would not have done equally, if there ‘had been no such thing as a God in the world; or that they have ever ‘sacrificed any passion, any present enjoyment, or even any inclination ‘of their minds, to the restraints and prohibitions of religion; with whom ‘indeed, religious motives have not weighed a feather in the scale against ‘interest or pleasure. To these it is utterly necessary that we preach ‘conversion. At this day we have not Jews and gentiles to preach to; ‘but these persons are really in as unconverted a state, as any Jew ‘or gentile could be in our Saviour’s time. They are no more Christians, as to any actual benefit of Christianity to their souls, than the ‘most hardened Jew, or the most profligate gentile was in the age of

But seriously, what a mockery is it of the feelings of a Christian minister, sincerely labouring to turn sinners to righteousness, to tell him, that he must by no means consider his congregation as consisting partly of those who are converted, and partly of those who are unconverted ! What congregation is there, in which no drunkard, no swearer, no fornicator, no sabbath-breaker, no unjust dealer, no covetous, ‘irreligious, worldly-minded’ man is to be found ? in which there are none who have been ‘satisfied with mere ‘nominal Christianity, or with something’ far ‘short of ‘true Christian holiness of heart and life ?’ And must not all these persons “turn” and be “converted” unto God, if they would not “die” eternally ? Must they not “repent and be converted,” if they would have their “sins blotted out ?” To what purpose, then, is it to interrupt those, who are seriously calling upon such characters “to

‘the gospel. As to any difference in the two cases, the difference is ‘all against them. These must be converted, before they can be saved. ‘The course of their thoughts must be changed, the very principles ‘upon which they act must be changed. Considerations, which ‘never, or which hardly ever entered into their minds, must deeply and ‘perpetually engage them. Views and motives, which did not influence ‘them at all, either as checks from doing evil, or as inducements to do ‘good, must become the views and motives which they regularly consult, ‘and by which they are guided : that is to say, there must be a revolution of principle : the visible conduct will follow the change ; but there ‘must be a revolution within. A change so entire, so deep, so important as this, I do allow to be a conversion, and no one, who is in the ‘situation above described, can be saved without undergoing it ; and he ‘must necessarily both be sensible of it at the time, and remember it all ‘his life afterwards. It is too momentous an event ever to be forgot. ‘A man might as easily forget his escape from a shipwreck. Whether ‘it was sudden, or whether it was gradual, if it was effected, (and the ‘fruits will prove that,) it was a true conversion : and every such person ‘may justly both believe and say it himself, that he was converted at a ‘particular assignable time. It may not be necessary to speak of his ‘conversion, but he will always think of it, with unbounded thankfulness to the giver of all grace, the author of all mercies, spiritual, as well as temporal.’

“repent and turn (or be converted) to God, and do works
 “meet for repentance,”—with the charge, that they are
 doing ‘a thing unheard of in the gospel?’ What means
 it to hold such useful labourers up to the wicked, whose
 conversion and salvation they are seeking, as persons ac-
 tuated by ‘conceits, which revelation warrants not, and
 ‘which reason and experience disclaim?’ What object
 does all this promote, but one, which ought to be the most
 opposite to all the desires and feelings of a Christian minis-
 ter’s heart—“to strengthen the hands of the wicked in his
 “wicked way”—and to furnish arms to him, wherewith to
 resist all the attempts made to bring him to a better mind?
 It is impossible not to write with a degree of zeal and ear-
 nestness against sentiments and passages, so big with prac-
 tical mischief.*

But there is a passage of Mr. Overton’s in which, it
 may be allowed, we are all concerned, that incurs the
 same condemnation, of exhibiting ‘a conceit which re-
 velation warrants not, and which reason and experience

* My feelings prompt me to decline, and my judgment does not urge
 me to meddle with, all those parts of Dr. M.’s tracts which are mere de-
 clamation, and appeal to the passions and prejudices of his readers,
 against the opinions he controverts. Were not this the case, I must se-
 riously call upon him to consider the tendency of such passages as that,
 in which Milton’s description of the lazar-house is applied to the metho-
 distic conversions. I am no more friendly than Dr. M. to the extrava-
 gances animadverted upon: but the imaginations of wicked and libertine
 men, furnished with such images, will not confine the application of them
 to the distortions which have deformed religion, but will infallibly asso-
 ciate them with things of a very different, and even of the most
 sacred nature. The wicked have ever been ready to charge their faith-
 ful reprovers with “desiring the woful day,” which they did but foretel;
 and they will be ready to avail themselves of the countenance which Dr.
 M. may even *seem* to afford them, for representing such persons as
 ‘dwelling with *horrible delight* on the terrors of God’s wrath.’ P. 77
 —79.

‘disclaim.’ It is this: ‘that in order to a state of salvation, a change of mind, of views, and dispositions must be effected in every person, wherever born, however educated, and of whatever external conduct.’*

On this sentiment Dr. M. proceeds to reason thus: ‘Some humble Christians undoubtedly there are, who, having been once regenerated by water and the Holy Spirit, have so followed his heavenly motions, and improved his sanctifying graces; have so pursued the calm and blameless tenor of their way; have preserved that childlike simplicity of character, and that childlike innocence of conduct, that their angels may not blush to behold the face of their heavenly Father.—Such was the conversation, even under the Jewish law, of Zacharias and Elizabeth, “who were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.” . . . And are we to be told that Christians, such as these, must experience an entire change of heart, a thorough conversion of their ways?’—I answer, Certainly not. Nor would Mr. Overton, or, I believe, any other writer whom Dr. M. has quoted, say that they must. Is it possible for Dr. M. to have understood Mr. O. to assert, that even the truly converted man must undergo another conversion, or be excluded from heaven? This is scarcely credible: yet, upon any other supposition, what avails all this reasoning? Dr. M. has himself immediately furnished the answer to it; though with some confusion of language, as to the distinct provinces of the atoning blood of Christ, and the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit. ‘By the blood of Christ,’ he says, these persons ‘*have been* purified from the original corruption of their nature; by that blood they *have been* cleansed of their actual sins; by the Holy Spirit of God, they *have been* regenerated;

* Mant, p. 61, and again p. 65, quoted from Overton, p. 160.

‘ his preventing grace *hath* conducted them ;’ his assisting
 ‘ grace *hath* co-operated with, and given effect to their
 ‘ zealous endeavours to persevere in the course of piety and
 ‘ virtue ; his sanctifying influence renews and invigorates
 ‘ them day by day. Let God have all the glory of their
 ‘ continuance in their Christian career ; but let it not be
 ‘ judged necessary that they should undergo “ a change of
 ‘ mind, of views, and dispositions,” when that change
 ‘ must be from holiness to sin.’ *

Is there any thing in this contrary to Mr. O.’s doctrine ?
 Let the reader examine the whole passage in that author,
 and judge whether it furnished a shadow of reason for the
 perversion which it has suffered.

‘ It is our opinion,’ Mr. O. says, ‘ that, in order to sal-
 ‘ vation, a change of mind, of views, and disposition
 ‘ must be effected in every person, wherever born, however
 ‘ educated, or of whatever external conduct. Is it said, this
 ‘ change is effected in us at our baptism ? We answer : have
 ‘ you then indeed kept your baptismal vow ? Have you in the
 ‘ uniform and habitual tenor of your life been “ renouncing
 ‘ sin, the world, and the devil ; following the example of our
 ‘ Saviour Christ ; and daily becoming more like unto him ?”
 ‘ Have you indeed experienced the inward and spiritual
 ‘ grace, of which the washing of water is the external em-
 ‘ blem, “ a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteous-
 ‘ ness ?” And, are your views, tempers, and pursuits
 ‘ indeed such, as in scripture every where characterize the
 ‘ regenerate children of God ? If so, *it is well* : but, IF
 ‘ NOT, remember, we add, the apostle’s reasoning respect-
 ‘ ing circumcision, that “ if thou be a breaker of the law,
 ‘ thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.” . . . Consider
 ‘ also, we proceed, upon what high authority it is declared,
 ‘ . . . that “ a good tree CANNOT bring forth evil fruit,” but

* P. 62, 63.

‘ that “ evil fruit ” is a certain proof of “ a corrupt tree ; ”
‘ and that an evil conduct can only proceed from an “ evil
‘ heart.” * Can any man, without direct injustice, read
over this passage, and then represent Mr. O. as, in it, de-
claring conversion to be still necessary for those who have
been, and are acting agreeably to their baptismal vows ? I
do not charge Dr. M. with intentional injustice ; far from
it : but I see not how he can be cleared of the want of that
care and attention, without which great practical injustice
often cannot be avoided. No one can read Mr. O.’s para-
graph with half the pains which should precede criticism
upon it, and understand him to say prospectively, with
regard to every person, converted or unconverted, that he
must *hereafter* undergo such a change ? His observation is in-
troduced by an express reference to the subject of his preced-
ing chapter, human depravity, and evidently relates to the na-
tural state of fallen man, and to a change which either *has*
taken place, *or must* take place in him, in order to his sal-
vation. In those who are really such Christians as Dr. M.
describes, the change is already made, and needs not to be
made again.

I do not think it necessary to enter into any minute ex-
amination of the scriptural use of the term *conversion*. Dr.
M. has not attempted to shew, that this is such as should
restrict its application to the bringing over of infidels to
the faith of Christ, or even to the turning of profligates to
righteousness of life. The Jews are continually called
upon “ to turn ” or “ be converted ; ” and that not only
when it became their duty to embrace Christianity, but by
their own prophets, during the continuance of their own
dispensation. The term is applied in the New Testament

* Overton’s True Churchman, p. 160, 161. It may be remarked
that Mr. O. does not, in this whole passage, use the obnoxious term,
conversion. His chapter is on ‘ the doctrine of repentance.’

to the reclaiming of a professed Christian, who had fallen into sin or error. "If any of you do err from the truth, and one *convert* him, let him know, that he, which *converteth* a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." * Our blessed Lord applies it to the recovery of Peter from his fall: "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren:" † and even (in a passage which bears a remarkable resemblance to his declaration of the necessity of regeneration in John iii.) to the change which still needed to be made, or at least carried forward, in the minds of his disciples: "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be *converted*, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." ‡—This is extending the use of the term much further than those persons commonly do, who fall under the censure of Dr. M.

But why need we adduce particular instances, when Dr. M. himself, with high approbation, cites the authority of a learned prelate, declaring that 'in scripture we find' conversion and repentance 'conjoined, as one and the same?' § If it be an unquestionable matter, that we are to preach repentance; and if in scripture conversion be 'conjoined with repentance, as one and the same;' I see not on what ground we are to be condemned for preaching conversion or repentance, indiscriminately: or what pretence there is for ranking the term *conversion* with 'the phraseology of enthusiasm.' || Further questions may remain, respecting the nature of conversion, (on which, indeed, it would seem that we are not at variance with Dr. M., **) but, if repen-

* James v. 19, 20.

† Luke xxii. 32.

‡ Matt. xviii. 5—8. Dr. M., quoting these words, says, 'such was our Saviour's warning to the *unbelieving Jews*.' (P. 58.) The fact is, they were addressed to our Lord's disciples, asking of him, "Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven!"

§ P. 64.

|| P. 66.

** Above, p. 240, 241.

tance and conversion be 'the same' thing, this must demonstrate, that to condemn the preaching of conversion, wherever we allow it necessary to preach repentance, is 'frivolous and vexatious.'

I do not, however, agree in the accuracy of this representation, that in scripture conversion and repentance mean exactly the same thing. As applied, indeed, to the first bringing of a sinner to repentance, it may be pretty nearly true: but not as applied to that daily repentance, in the exercise of which the Christian lives. We all need repentance at all times: our continual imperfection and sinfulness demand it. But we do not all, in the same way, need conversion. In scripture, as well as in modern language, this term *generally* includes the idea of a *commencement* of true religion, which in many has happily taken place, and does not need to be repeated. And, I apprehend, it is from feeling this difference that many persons are more willing to hear of repentance than of conversion. They are willing to acknowledge themselves sinners, and imperfect, and therefore needing repentance: but they are not willing to be told that they are so 'far gone from original righteousness,' so perverted and estranged from God, that they must have "a new heart created, and a "right spirit put within them," and that otherwise they can never serve God acceptably on earth, or inherit his heavenly kingdom hereafter. A duty, which is common to them with sincere and devout Christians, they will consent to hear of, at least in a general manner: but of what is necessary *to make* them true and devout Christians they cannot bear to be told, because it suggests unpleasant truth concerning their present state.

Let repentance be preached, such as the necessities of one, who has hitherto been 'satisfied with mere nominal 'Christianity,' require, and such as the term *μετανοια* (a

change of mind) implies; and the doctrine of repentance, I fear, will prove no less unpalatable than that of conversion. But it is because something much short of this may be understood by the word; something which resembles not “the washing of the hands, and the head,” and the whole man, but that of him, who, having already been in the bath, “needeth not, save to wash his feet,” and is then “clean every whit:”* it is, I apprehend, because repentance is conceived to mean only something of this slighter and more general kind, that it is less offensive to the fastidiousness of modern ears.—There is great justness in the following observations, which have been made upon this subject. ‘Not a few either exclude the words conversion and regeneration from their vocabulary, or are extremely sparing of such expressions. They prefer the use of the term repentance: but the repentance of which they speak is interpreted by the body of their hearers to be something very slight and transient. It is construed to mean regret on account of some few specific acts which have been wrong, or a sorrow which may be supposed to have sufficiently manifested itself by consenting to the confession in the church service while it was read. It is not habitual contrition on account of corruption, which the penitent now perceives to have pervaded the heart and life.—The amendment of conduct also, which many persons of this class labour to enforce, seems to consist chiefly in the renunciation of gross sins, and in a due observance of the public ordinances of the church. They represent man as in a safe and good state, unless and until he, by some course of immorality, forfeits his title to the Christian hope; and though they treat of sins as acts which provoke God and bring guilt on the perpetrator, they seldom

* John xiii. 6—10.

‘ speak of them as indicative of an unpardoned and generally unsanctified state.’ *

Two or three more points are all which I shall notice, and my remarks upon them will be very brief.

Dr. M. endeavours to establish a marked distinction, among the conversions recorded in scripture, between those which were effected suddenly, and those which were more gradually accomplished. The former, he says, were ‘ the consequence of miraculous evidence;’ the latter, ‘ of a deliberate attention to the ordinary methods of conviction, and a willing and rational acquiescence in the result.’ † Of the one he adduces as instances the three thousand added to the church at the day of pentecost: the five thousand who subsequently ‘ believed the word preached by Peter and John;’ the people of Lydda and Saron, Acts ix; the two persons whom he calls ‘ the proconsul of Asia,’ and ‘ the jailor at Thyateira;’ ‡ and, finally, St Paul, of whom he expressly says, ‘ It was the light from heaven above the brightness of the sun, and the voice of the heavenly vision, which converted’ him.—Among the others,

* Christian Observer, 1808, p. 170.

† P. 68, 71, 72.

‡ P. 68. The inaccuracies into which Dr. M. falls in his appeals to scripture are not a little extraordinary, especially in a learned commentator. We have just seen him adducing our Lord’s admonition to his disciples, (Matt. xviii. 3,) as ‘ his warning to the *unbelieving Jews*.’ He here, and again, p. 84, mis-names the “ deputy,” or proconsul, of the island of Cyprus, ‘ the proconsul of *Asia*.’ In three different passages he calls the man, who is known to every one as *the Philippian jailor*, ‘ the jailor at Thyateira,’ or alludes to what occurred in connection with his history, as happening ‘ at Thyateira,’ a city of Asia, instead of at Philippi, in Macedonia. P. 68, 81, 86. The source of the mistake is, I suppose, there happening to have been at that time at Philippi “ a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple of the city of Thyatira.”—All this occurs after Dr. M.’s Lecture has passed the press not less than six or seven times!

he instances the Bereans, (Acts xvii.) who, he says, were ‘not wrought upon by the Spirit of God, operating independently of, and in a manner distinguished from evidence, and argument, and moral suasion; but (they believed) subsequently to, and in consequence of, their daily investigation of the scriptures, and ingenuous comparison between them and the doctrine of the apostle.’

It is readily allowed, that the evidence of miracles, which was afforded to some of these characters, as well as the study of the scriptures, for which the others are so justly praised, was a *means* by which their conversion was brought about. But does Dr. M. suppose, that miraculous evidence rendered any influence of the Spirit of God upon the mind, “to take away the heart of stone, and to give the heart of flesh,” or “to work in men to will and to do, of his good pleasure,” superfluous? If so, he is, I conceive, at variance with all sound and orthodox divines, as he certainly is with the doctrines of the church to which he belongs. And further, if miraculous evidence were sufficient, without any such inward operation of the Spirit, how came it to pass, that, while many were so happily affected by it, many more were only moved to enmity and opposition, proportioned to the overbearing nature of the proof, by which a hated conviction was forced upon them? *

Does he, again, conceive either miraculous evidence, or such an operation of the Spirit upon the mind as I have described, and as the scriptures certainly much insist upon, to be incompatible with ‘argument, moral suasion,’ and ‘a deliberate attention to the ordinary methods of conviction?’ If so, I should be sorry to take his views of the subject. I understand miracles to have furnished argument; and to have excited attention to argument; and the gracious influence of the divine Spirit on the mind to be designed to enlighten the understanding, and to incline the will to

* See, for example, John xi. 47—57. xii. 10, 11.

that ‘deliberate attention,’ and to that ‘ready acquiescence’ in the result’ of ‘deliberate attention, to the ordinary ‘methods of conviction,’ of which Dr. M. speaks.

But this connects with another point which demands our notice. Dr. M. is of opinion, that ‘there is some disposition and temper of mind more apt than others to receive ‘the effectual impressions of the gospel.’ ‘Such,’ he says, from an author whom he styles ‘invaluable,’ ‘is the honest and good heart in the parable: such are the honest and meek, and the poor in spirit: such as do the truth and the will of God, so far as their information serves them; such as are the weary and heavy-laden, and the like; they are resembled to sheep and to babes; and are said to be of God, to have learned of the Father, and to know him. ‘These are said to be *ordained*, that is *disposed*,* and in a fit posture for eternal life; and of this ingenuous and noble temper were the people of Berea.’† That such a difference of character exists, there is no doubt: the only question is, Whence does it originate? Is it from nature, or from ‘the preventing grace of God?’ How our church answers the question, may easily be judged from her tenth article; from her thirteenth article; from the passage quoted from her homilies at the beginning of chapter x; and from her prayers, which teach us to ascribe ‘all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works,’ to God. In a sense somewhat different than Dr. M.’s author appears to mean, such persons have been “taught, and have learned “of the Father:” hence it is, that they are ‘disposed’ to “come unto Christ.”

* Both this author (Womack) and Dr. M. would fain have the words, (Acts xiii. 48.) “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed,” to mean, as many ‘as were *fit* or *well-disposed* for the kingdom of heaven.’ They do not however, venture to assert, that *ταπεινωται* ever expresses disposition of mind.

† P. 73.

The last passage on which I offer any remark is the following. It professes to be directed against the methodists, but its principle strikes directly at the doctrines of our common Christianity. It is as follows, p. 75: ‘It is true, we hear them telling their deluded followers, that they ought to be converted; expostulating with them for not choosing to be converted, and for putting off their conversion, for not turning to God directly; intreating them to repent and be converted; yet wherefore? when in almost the same breath they tell them, that the author of this conversion is the Holy Ghost; that it is not their own free will; it is not moral suasion; that nothing short of the influence of the Spirit of the living God can effect this change in their hearts.’

Now what is the principle which Dr. M. here assumes? It is this, that nothing, which cannot be effected without ‘the influence of the Spirit of the living God,’ is to be made the subject of exhortation! That it is absurd and self-contradictory to exhort us to that, of which the Holy Ghost must be ‘the author’ in us! In this principle, Dr. M. is again in entire unison with persons whose doctrines, I am sure, he abhors—the antinomians, who hold that repentance, that faith, that prayer, is *no duty* to men in general, because none of these things can be performed aright but by the grace of God. Dr. M. holds, that it is absurd to exhort men to that, which they cannot perform but by ‘the influence of the Spirit:’ and the shocking perverters of Christianity, just named, agree with him!—But is not repentance the gift of God? Is not faith the gift of God? Are not love, and joy, and peace, and long-suffering, and gentleness, and goodness, and meekness, and temperance, “the fruits of the Spirit?” And yet is it not our duty to repent, to believe, and to exercise all these Christian graces? And are we not to be exhorted to perform this duty, though ‘nothing short of the influence of the Spirit of the living God’ can enable

us to do it? Do not ‘all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works proceed from God?’ And yet is it not our duty, and are we not to be exhorted, to conceive holy desires, to form good counsels, and to execute just works?—In short, has Dr. M. never heard of it, as a first principle in all sound theology, indeed as a fact which presents itself on the very face of the scriptures, that there is *nothing which almighty God, in one place, engages to work in us, which he does not, in another, exhort and command us to do*, as much as if all depended upon ourselves? Is it promised in Deut. xxx, “The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart to love the Lord thy God?” it is commanded in Deut. x, “Circumcise your heart, and be no more stiff-necked.” Is it the gracious engagement of God, (Ezek. xxxvi.) “A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh?” it is his injunction and exhortation, by the same prophet, (c. xviii.) “Make you a new heart, and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel.” Is it “the Lord” who must “direct our hearts into the love of God?” and are we “kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation?” (2 Thess. iii. 1 Pet. i.) We are charged also, (Jude 21.) “Keep yourselves in the love of God.” Are not repentance and faith the gifts of God? Yet it is our duty, which we are commanded to perform, “to repent and believe the gospel.”

If these things present a difficulty, and a *speculative* difficulty, it is allowed, they do present, he who has not felt his own system encumbered with it, either has not embraced the system of scripture, or has very little considered what he has professed to embrace. But, though a difficulty is admitted to exist in speculation in this point, none can be felt *in practice*. Then do the *commands* and *exhortations* answer their purpose, when they excite us to seek of God

the fulfilment of his *promises* : and when we plead his *promises* in earnest prayer, then shall we be enabled to obey his *commands*. And accordingly we may add, to the maxim above laid down, the following: *That there is nothing which is in one place made the subject of command, and in another of promise, which is not in a third place made the subject of prayer unto God.* Thus, “ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me ! ” Here the thing *enjoined* in Ezek. xviii., and *promised* in Ezek. xxxvi., is *prayed for* in Psalm li. And the same might be shewn of every other duty and blessing.

But what shall we say if Dr. M. has not only, in the basis of this argument, contradicted the first principles of sound theology, and scriptural knowledge, but if he has, at least as directly, contradicted himself? This is the case. In page 65, he professes his ‘ cheerful concurrence ’ with Mr. Overton, who declares, that ‘ *the author of the happy change of conversion is the Holy Spirit.* ’ In page 75, he argues the absurdity of certain persons ‘ intreating men ‘ to repent and be converted,’ and ‘ expostulating with ‘ them for not choosing to be converted ’—because ‘ in almost the same breath they tell them, that *the author of this conversion is the Holy Ghost !* ’

Can a writer who falls repeatedly into such self-contradictions ; who so frequently mistakes the scriptures ; who so lightly, and even unconsciously, goes about to subvert established principles of orthodoxy ; be justly set up for a competent guide of public opinion ? Shall we think him properly selected ‘ to convey, to the community at large, ‘ correct notions,’ on the most important theological subjects?—I should be sorry to say one word, tending to lower Dr. M.’s reputation as an author, did I not think that reputation employed to give currency to opinions, contrary to the real doctrines of the church of England, and to “ the truth of the gospel ” of Christ. But, as that is my

deliberate judgment, I offer no other apology for what I have written.

Here, then, I close my strictures on Dr. M. To any one who may think of honouring these pages with an answer, I beg leave to say as follows: All I ask in an opponent is *fairness*. Give me an antagonist, who shall ‘feel’ an instinctive aversion to vain and fruitless contentions ‘concerning the mere outsides of questions;’ * one who shall ‘wish to meet fairly the real points in dispute, and to grapple with them;’ * and I am satisfied. Such an antagonist I have endeavoured to shew myself to Dr. M.; and, should I meet with one who proceeds upon the same principle in return, I hope I shall be ready to avail myself of any light and instruction he may have to afford me. But I must say, that the plan on which replies are too often conducted is ‘nauseating to every sincere lover of truth, and every really honest mind. I have known replies made, wherein a few detached points were selected, on which a little wit, a little eloquence, or a little seeming argumentation might be displayed, but in which all the main questions at issue were either misrepresented, or passed over in silence: insomuch that, on reading over again the book which was to be answered, and noting in the margin the topics which were left untouched, their amount scarcely fell short of nine-tenths of the whole. Now this is offensive and disgusting.—So, in the present instance, nothing can be more easy than to re-state, with confidence, assertions, which have been already made; nothing more easy than to collect again a few detached sentences from our church services, (the meaning of which is one great point in dispute,) and to say of them, ‘They need no comment: language cannot be plainer:’—nothing more easy than—to do many

* Dean of Carlisle.

things which I could name, and which may raise the shout of victory among a man's own partizans : but all this can advance us nothing in the pursuit of truth : it can afford no satisfaction to the honest mind. Let us see the question at issue fairly stated : let us see the arguments which have been adduced upon it from the scriptures—from the articles and liturgy of the church—from the analogy of the other sacrament—from the use of the same language concerning adults as is employed concerning infants—though, in the former, one would suppose *a right state of mind* must by all be allowed necessary to prove ‘the sanctification of the Spirit :’ Let these and other arguments be fairly met and canvassed, and I say again, I am satisfied ; I will regard the man, who thus combats me, not as an adversary, but as my coadjutor in the investigation of truth.

Nov. 29, 1815.

APPENDIX.

NOTE I. Page 9.

THE treatment which the quotation here made from Bishop Hopkins has met with from Mr. Archdeacon Daubeny, in his ‘Considerations on Regeneration,’ recently published, is not a little extraordinary. ‘On the authority of Bishop Hopkins,’ he says, ‘we are here given to understand, that baptized infants (for to these subjects I confine myself,) *are translated by baptism, from a state of nature, into a state of grace, that they are thereby justified and accepted to God’s favour.* But still, it seems, they are unsanctified: their sanctification remaining to be evidenced by the future influence of the Holy Spirit on the disposition and habits of their souls.’ * P. 67.

In the first place, Bishop Hopkins is here speaking neither of ‘infants’ nor of adults, in particular, nor at all upon the subject of baptism, or the sacraments: but simply of the two *distinct but inseparable* blessings of justification and sanctification. Secondly, Mr. D. grounds upon the quotation the conclusion, that the good bishop, and others of us, after him, hold certain subjects to be ‘justified and accepted to God’s favour,’ but yet to be ‘unsanctified:’ directly contrary to the words which he himself cites—*distinct though inseparable.* But, thirdly and chiefly, the words above printed in italics are given by Mr. D. *under double inverted commas*, as if they were the very words of Bishop Hopkins: yet the reader will have seen that the passage contains *nothing like them*; nor do they at all convey his sentiments! Afterwards also Mr. D. asks, ‘What becomes then of the essential distinction between those who are said to be justified and accepted to God’s favour, but are still left deficient of sanctification?’ P. 70.

* Can Mr. D. conceive of infants ‘evidencing’ their sanctification very distinctly while they are infants? However the *sanctification* may be present, I should suppose the *evidencing* of it must *necessarily* be future in them.

He further rejects the distinction—than which none can be more clear in itself, and which has been generally considered as very important, in order to preserve ‘whole and undefiled’ the doctrine of ‘justification by faith’ only—between justification and sanctification; pronouncing it ‘a distinction without a difference, as it strikes him, a mere creature of Bishop Hopkins’s imagination.’ P. 68. Yet only a few pages before, he had cited, with approbation, from Hooker, the self-same distinction between ‘that saving grace of *imputation* which taketh away all former *guiltiness*,’ and ‘that *infused* divine virtue of the Holy Ghost, which giveth to the powers of the soul, that first *disposition* towards future newness of life.’ P. 48.

It is to be observed, however, that Mr. D. expressly contends for a sanctification of the dispositions of the mind—‘a change of heart for the time,’ ‘in some degree taking place’ in infants at their baptism. Without it he thinks that ‘the Holy Spirit, in the case of infants, must have performed his part *imperfectly*.’ (p. 68, 69.) My other opponent, Dr. Laurence, on the contrary, holds up every such idea to ridicule, as a figment of Calvinism.

NOTE II. Page 11.

On the term Regeneration.

IN the former edition, I more closely restricted the term regeneration in this place to ‘*the commencement*’ of sanctification, than appears to me necessary, or perhaps proper, especially in considering the writings of the church of England, which use a less confined and systematic language than is employed by many modern divines. I had, indeed, deviated from such a restricted use of the word before the close of my work, when, in the conclusion of c. xii. speaking of the inward and spiritual grace of baptism as described in the catechism, namely ‘a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness,’ I observed; ‘there is no need to confine these terms to the very first communication of grace to the soul: and to suppose them so confined in this place, would be to contradict both the article, which assumes “grace” to have been previously given, and the preceding sentences of the catechism, which require “repentance and faith” in persons to be baptized.’ To this I now add, that the exhortation after baptism inculcates this very thing, which the catechism describes as the

spiritual grace of that sacrament, as a duty incumbent throughout life upon 'us who are baptized,' namely 'to die to sin, and rise again unto righteousness.'

It would further seem that the xxviii Article would not so restrict the term, since it speaks of '*faith confirmed* and '*grace increased*' as the benefits conveyed to the right receivers of baptism, though all, I presume, agree, (however the running title of Dr. Mant's tract may imply the contrary,) that 'regeneration,' in some sense of the word, is 'the spiritual grace of baptism.'

Writers also of various descriptions concur in this extended use of the word. Luther (a great authority, with Dr. Laurence, for explaining the doctrines of our church,) says: '*Sacramentum vel signum baptismi, id quod videmus, brevî perficitur; verum significatio ejus, et spiritualis baptismus, DEMERSIO scilicet PECCATORUM, illa per hanc totam vitam durat, et non nisi in morte perficitur. Tum enim vere demergitur homo in baptismum, et vere fit quod baptismus significat.*' Op. tom. I. p. 283. edit. Jenæ. Calvin, quoted by Dr. Laurence, thus explains his sentiments: '*Regnum Dei incipere in hominibus sentimus, quando regenerantur. Tunc autem regenerari dicimus, quando illuminantur in Christi fidem, reformantur in obedientiam Dei ipsorum corda; et, in summa, quando in ipsis instauratur Dei imago. Sed regenerationem nego momento perfici. Satis est, si quotidianos facit progressus usque ad mortem.*' Op. vol. viii. p. 518. Dr. L. himself admits, that 'regeneration has been sometimes appropriated, not to the single act of spiritual birth, but to continued acts of spiritual reviviscence, embracing the whole period of the Christian life;' and that the writer of the homily for Whitsunday evidently 'comprehends under the term regeneration, not only the commencement, but also the completion, of sanctification.'—Vindication, p. 11 and 98. Archdeacon Daubeny also speaks of 'the use of the word regeneration, not in its exclusive application to baptism, but in its unrestrained and comprehensive sense, as applicable to the whole work of the Holy Spirit, from the sacrament of Christian initiation to the end of the Christian's life;' and affirms that 'the more restrained, together with the more extended, use of the term regeneration; in its application to the first communication of divine grace in baptism; to the continued supplies of it in the subsequent stages of the Christian life; to the renewal of it after forfeiture; or to some more than ordinary manifestations

‘ of it under particular circumstances ; constitutes *that comprehensive doctrine of the church of England on this important subject, which all her sound divines hold in substance, under whatever terms, or by whatever distinctions, they at different times have thought proper to describe it.*’ *Considerations*, p. 41, 42, 56, 84, 90. He further quotes from Archbishop Tillotson’s Sermon on Regeneration the following passages : ‘ It is said that *regeneration* only signifies our first entrance into this state (of grace), and *sanctification* our progress and continuance in it ; but this is a great mistake, for though it be true that regeneration does signify our first entrance into this state, yet it is not true that it *only* signifies that ; for it is used in scripture to signify our continuance in that state ; for Christians are said to be children of God, and consequently in a regenerate state, not only in the instant of this change, but during their continuance in it. Beside that our first change is as well called *sanctification*, as our progress and continuance in a state of holiness ; so that neither is there any difference between regeneration and sanctification. They both of them signify both our first entrance into a holy state, and our continuance and progress in it ; though regeneration do more frequently denote the making of this change, and our first entrance into it.’ *Considerations*, p. 83, 84.* Thus also an article (said to proceed from a very respectable quarter,) in a periodical publication : ‘ Another occasion of doubt has been the use made by many divines of the word regeneration, when they were not speaking of baptism. There needs be no embarrassment from any such cause. Every act of the Holy Spirit upon the mind of the Christian, conducing to form in him the new life, is an act of regenerating power ; every advance of the Christian in that new life is an increase of his regeneration. The first gift of new life in baptism is most properly called regeneration, because it is the first : setting aside that accident of its being the first,† the reason of man shall never be able to

* I omit Mr. D.’s repeated parentheses, in which he supplies the archbishop’s deficiencies, as to our first change or regeneration being made in baptism. I do not find that his grace says one word of baptism in all this part, at least, of his discourse.

† I profess myself utterly at a loss to understand sensible writers thus speaking of the communication of divine life as always *first* made in baptism, even while they admit that in adults repentance and faith must *precede* baptism, and that without these Christian graces no spiritual benefit is obtained by such recipients of baptism.

‘ pronounce wherein it differs from any subsequent gift
 ‘ conducing to the furtherance of the same state We
 ‘ do not perceive any difficulty in understanding how men
 ‘ may be regenerate in baptism, and yet divines be conti-
 ‘ nually speaking of another and subsequent regeneration.
 ‘ The use of discriminating terms is always of service; but
 ‘ for the credit of our whole body of theology, we wish to
 ‘ say, that the promiscuous use of the word is strictly
 ‘ correct, though it has proved inconvenient. For the
 ‘ circumstance of priority in point of time is not a
 ‘ sufficient ground of making two terms for a subject
 ‘ otherwise agreeing in itself. It is one of the differences,
 ‘ which the analysis of language seldom attends to.’ *Quar-*
terly Review, July 1816, p. 504.

NOTE III. Page 12.

Nature of Regeneration.

1. ‘ IF regeneration be really *synonymous* with baptism,
 ‘ that is, with pouring water on the person in the name of
 ‘ the blessed Trinity, then the question is at an end: bap-
 ‘ tism is regeneration, and regeneration is baptism: but
 ‘ then, the minister being the only agent, it would be absurd
 ‘ to talk of “regeneration by the Holy Ghost.”*—2. If
 ‘ regeneration be only a badge of external profession, so
 ‘ that a person is thenceforward to be reckoned a Christian,
 ‘ and called so, without respect to any spiritual operation
 ‘ which may or may not have passed on his mind, then it
 ‘ would be equally nugatory to speak of the Spirit as effect-
 ‘ ing regeneration.—3. If regeneration be further enlarged
 ‘ to the remission of all past sin, original and actual, but
 ‘ nothing more, still the agency of the Holy Spirit would
 ‘ be questionable: at least, all the prayers for personal
 ‘ holiness in the baptismal service would be misplaced;
 ‘ nor would the term regenerate be made at all synony-
 ‘ mous with “sons of God,” “born and begotten again,”
 ‘ (as even Dr. Mant would make it,) inasmuch as both in
 ‘ scripture, and by our church, these last terms are insepa-
 ‘ rably connected with a pure and holy state of mind.—
 ‘ 4. Once more: if regeneration be considered to stand
 ‘ only for an external, and what we may call official, but

* Our church says, baptism is ‘*a sign of regeneration.*’ Art. xxvii.
 Can a thing be the *sign of itself*?

' unsaving, operation by which, as in the priesthood, the
 ' person baptized is brought under superior obligations, a
 ' higher profession, and, it may be, greater assistances
 ' towards a religious course, we still think various incon-
 ' veniences would follow.' ' If fully laid down as a defini-
 ' tion of regeneration, it either does away the meaning of
 ' the term altogether, as standing for a real change of
 ' heart and life; or it creates a necessity for the distinction,
 ' which appears to us confused, between baptismal and
 ' spiritual regeneration. In fact, in this latter case, it
 ' seems to affix two graces to baptism, one conferred at all
 ' times and on all persons who are baptized, (contrary we
 ' think to the very notion of a sacrament,) and the other
 ' a spiritual grace contingent on the disposition of the bap-
 ' tized person. In short, though we think that the expla-
 ' nations of our baptismal service given on this principle
 ' are fully sufficient to satisfy any reasonable man in the
 ' use of it, and are highly instructive and profitable as a
 ' basis of subsequent admonition, yet we cannot but hold
 ' that there is something still more definite in the meaning
 ' of our church, and that both by herself and by scripture
 ' a real and effectual change of nature is clearly and
 ' strongly pointed out, as intended by the terms regenera-
 ' tion and regenerate.

' We say then that regeneration, both in scripture and
 ' in our church formularies, substantially refers to that spi-
 ' ritual and vital change in the heart and life, by which a
 ' man may be truly said to be created anew after the image
 ' of God in righteousness and true holiness.' We need
 not ' seek for a more full, express, and exquisite delineation
 ' of this state than is to be found in our own invaluable
 ' baptismal service? Every term used in that service enters
 ' more or less into the notion of regeneration, which, we
 ' conceive, was held by the framers of our liturgy. And, as
 ' there is scarcely one petition in the whole form but we
 ' could most devoutly offer both for ourselves and others,
 ' during every moment of our earthly existence, so we be-
 ' lieve there is not a moment in which, our church herself
 ' being judge, we might not properly pray for regeneration,
 ' even to the very end of our spiritual course. For the
 ' exact sense of this term does not appear to us to de-
 ' note merely the *commencement*, but also the *existence*
 ' of the spiritual life in the soul; not merely the act by
 ' which we *become* new creatures, but also the state and
 ' condition in which we *are* new creatures in Christ Jesus.

‘ For this state we ought continually and devoutly to pray.
 ‘ Imaged to us—“ surely witnessed and effectually signed”
 ‘ to us, upon true faith and repentance, in our baptism, we
 ‘ earnestly desire that this state, the spiritual grace of bap-
 ‘ tism, may fully take place within us : and seeing a full pro-
 ‘ mise, on God’s part, signed and sealed to us in that holy sa-
 ‘ crament, we further desire, on our part, so to approach the
 ‘ throne of grace that our prayers for the fulfilment of
 ‘ that promise may not be in vain in the Lord ; but that
 “ being steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and rooted in cha-
 ‘ rity, we may so pass the waves of this troublesome world,
 ‘ that finally we may come to the land of everlasting life.”
 —*Christian Observer*, 1816, p. 231, 232.

NOTE IV. Page 17.

Baptism called by the Jews regeneration.

DR. M. asserts that our Lord ‘ adopted not only the ce-
 ‘ remony of baptism’ from the Jews, ‘ but also the very
 ‘ term, by which they had described the change wrought in
 ‘ the baptized.’ His principal authority is perhaps to be
 found in ‘ *Wall’s History of Infant Baptism.*’ That learned
 writer lays it down, that the Jews called the baptism of a
 proselyte ‘ his new birth, regeneration, or being born again.’
 This, he says, is a very ‘ usual phrase of the Jews :’
 and he gives two proofs of it, one from the *Gemara*, or
 commentary on the great collection of Jewish traditions, as
 follows : ‘ If any one become a proselyte, he is *like a child*
 ‘ *new-born* :’ the other from Maimonides : ‘ The gentile that
 ‘ is made a proselyte, and the slave that is made free, behold,
 ‘ he is *like a child new-born*.’ On these quotations I might
 remark, 1. That they make no mention of baptism. It is
 being *proselyted*, not being *baptized*, that is compared to a
 new birth. 2. That being ‘ LIKE a child new-born,’ and
 “ ye must BE BORN again,” are widely different language.
 But 3dly, and principally, one of these passages was not
 written till at least 500 years, and the other not till above
 1100 years after our Saviour’s time. They are poor evi-
 dence, therefore, of the language prevalent when his dis-
 course with Nicodemus occurred ; and I must still think
 that Jewish teacher’s being utterly at a loss to comprehend
 our Lord’s terms, a sufficient proof that he was accustomed
 to no such periphrasis for baptism.—*Wall*, *Introduct.* § 6, and
Prideaux’s Connect. Part I. Book v.

NOTE V. Page 18.

I TRUSTED that I had sufficiently guarded this passage from being misunderstood or misrepresented, both by the concluding sentence of the paragraph, ‘I speak here of the *water*, that which alone our Lord names, and that which Dr. M. calls *the instrument* ; not of the sacrament of baptism, which we consider as more than a mere sign :’ and by the following note, two pages afterwards ; ‘I again beg it may be observed, that I am not calling the sacrament of baptism a mere emblem ; I am here simply treating of the one expression *born of water* and of the Spirit, John iii. 5.’ Mr. Daubeney, however, makes the passage his authority for representing the divines, who differ from him, as ‘objecting to regeneration as conveyed by baptism, partly, at least, on this principle, that they cannot conceive or imagine how grace should be attached to an outward work of man upon the body.’ He ‘takes leave to ask me, whether I consider human conception as constituting the proper boundary of divine operations?’ refers me to *Socinus* ; delivers the warning that we may be ‘entering on the road to *infidelity*, however insensible we may be to our situation ;’ and, in fine, spends many pages in demolishing this fundamental objection, as he supposes it to be, on our part, to the admission of regeneration by baptism, namely, that we cannot conceive or understand the nature of the process !—I most readily allow, that, in admitting the principle, or in adopting the course of reasoning, thus censured, we should have laid the very foundation-stone of infidelity ; but I have no more to do with such a principle, or with such reasoning, than the learned archdeacon himself has.—*Considerations*, p. 13, &c.

NOTE VI. Page 31.

Meaning of Renovation.

‘MACKNIGHT, recommended by the Bishop of Lincoln, in his *Elements of Theology*, to young students in divinity, speaks in this place (Tit. iii. 5) of baptism as called *the bath of regeneration*, “not because any change in the nature of the baptized person is produced by baptism, but because it is an emblem of the purification of his soul from sin.” “The real change,” he observes, “in the nature of a believer, which entitles him to be called *a son of God*, is not ef-

‘ fected by baptism, but by *the renewing of the Holy Ghost* mentioned in the next clause. Hence our Lord, whom the apostle hath followed here, joined the two together, in his discourse to Nicodemus, John iii. 5.”

‘ St. Chrysostom, whom we may consider as speaking the sense of the ancients, in beautifully descanting on this passage, and figuratively describing the Christian change as the entire demolition of the fabric of corrupt nature, and the erection of a new one, adds: “God hath not only as it were re-furnished us, but has re-formed us, from above, for this is the meaning of the expression, *and the renewing of the Holy Ghost*. He has *made us new* from above: how? By the Holy Spirit, &c.”—Indeed, the whole confusion amongst the moderns respecting this passage seem to us to arise from a mistaken, and we must add, an *unscriptural* conception of the word *renewal*, which may, it is true, as in English, sometimes mean the restoration of a thing, as a colour or a quality formerly existing; but which in an apostolical use would lead us rather to the idea of something *formed or created anew*. We believe that almost every instance in the New Testament where this expression occurs will justify our present view of it. And it is remarkable that one occasion in which the term “renew” is applied to a restoration to former privileges, and to a former character, is not only one on which *such* a renewal is declared to be impossible, but also, by a kind of anomaly, the word “again” is singularly added to “renew,” as if to mark clearly that the latter term is even then used in its proper sense of the first new-creation of the man. The scriptural reader will know that we allude to Heb. vi. 6.—The only real exception we remember occurs in 2 Cor. iv. 16: “Though our outward man perish, yet our inward man is *renewed* day by day;” where it is to be observed, however, that the apostle is not speaking of the renewal of decayed impressions, but treats quite of a different subject.’

‘ This true meaning of the word *renew* in scripture . . . enables us, in the most satisfactory manner, to answer the challenge of Dr. Mant, which invites us to point out a single passage in the whole New Testament where baptized Christians are exhorted to be regenerated, or are reminded of the necessity of being born again. We can now refer him to that most remarkable passage in Eph. iv. 22—24. “That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be *renewed*’ (formed anew) ‘in the spirit of your

‘ mind ; and that ye put on the new man, which after God
 ‘ is created in righteousness and true holiness.” In this
 ‘ passage indeed the whole regenerating change is most
 ‘ accurately described, and consequently the propriety of
 ‘ general exhortations even to baptized Christians to obtain
 ‘ that change fully justified. Compare also Rom. xii. 2 :
 “ Be not conformed to this world, but be ye *transformed*
 ‘ in the *renewing* of your mind ;” and Col. iii. 10 : “ And
 ‘ have put on the new man, which is *renewed* in knowledge
 ‘ after the image of him that created him.”—*Christian*
Observer, 1816, p. 170, 171.

It is remarkable that Dr. Johnson, who certainly had nothing like the present controversy in his contemplation, explains the word *to renew*, as used ‘ *in theology*,’ to mean ‘ *to make anew ; to transform to new life.*’ His authorities are Heb. vi. 6, and Rom. xii. 2.

NOTE VII. Page 42.

Prayers for regeneration.

Dr. M. demands, ‘ Where are we instructed to pray after
 ‘ baptism for regeneration?’ The Society for promoting
 Christian Knowledge, which circulates his tracts, shall
 answer the demand.

‘ Grant that I may effectually feel the power of thy word,
 ‘ for a thorough and entire renewal of my soul. *Let me be*
 ‘ BEGOTTEN AGAIN *by the gospel*, as by incorruptible seed,’
 &c.—*Plain Directions for reading the Holy Scriptures*, a tract
 of the Society’s, p. 33.

‘ O Lord, make us holy through *the effectual* REGENERA-
 ‘ TION *and sanctification of thy Holy Spirit*, that we may
 ‘ love thee with all our heart and soul,’ &c. *Necessary*
duty of Family Prayer, ditto, p. 20, 21.

These tracts are, of course, designed for distribution,
 and for use, among baptized persons. The next passage
 speaks for itself upon this point.

‘ O blessed Lord, who *hast been pleased in mercy to engraft*
 ‘ *me into the body of thy holy church*, grant that I may be
 ‘ also a living member thereof. REGENERATE ME BY THE
 ‘ GRACE OF THY HOLY SPIRIT, that I may walk worthy
 ‘ of the vocation wherewith I am called.’ *Husbandman’s*
Manual, ditto, p. 41, 42.

But may not still higher authority be adduced for the use
 of such prayers by baptized persons? The Society, it

seems, has decided, that the collect for Christmas day, 'Grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit,' is a prayer, not for *regeneration*, but only for subsequent *renovation*, or improvement, the fact of our previous *regeneration* being assumed, and taken for granted : * but it has not, I believe, promulgated any similar exposition of the collect for the circumcision. In it we pray, 'Grant us *the true circumcision of the Spirit*, that our hearts and all our members being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, we may in all things obey thy blessed will.' When my reader shall have considered what is adduced concerning circumcision in the next chapter, I will beg him to decide, wherein this '*true circumcision of the Spirit*' differs from *the regeneration of the Holy Ghost*. And even now I would refer it to him, whether that, by which 'our hearts and all our members are to be mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts,' so that 'we may in all things obey God's blessed will,' be any thing materially different from 'that death unto sin and new birth unto righteousness,' which the catechism considers as 'the inward and spiritual grace of baptism.' What likewise is to be said of the prayer in the burial service, 'We meekly beseech thee to raise us from the death of sin to the life of righteousness'? Is not this a prayer for 'the spiritual grace' of baptism put into the mouths of baptized persons?

* How gratuitous an assumption it is, that the participle *being* must necessarily have, or even that it most naturally has, a *retrospective*, exclusively of a *prospective*, meaning, in the sentence, 'Grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit,' I should imagine every English reader must feel; and the following passages do certainly demonstrate: 'Graciously hear us—that we thy servants, being hurt by no persecutions, may evermore give thanks unto thee: 'Grant that thy church, being alway preserved from false apostles, may be ordered and guided by faithful and true pastors: 'O send thy word of command to rebuke the raging winds and the roaring sea; that we, being delivered from this distress, may live to serve thee.' The last example is from 'a prayer to be used in storms at sea.' The baptismal services themselves furnish examples. 'Wash and sanctify them with the Holy Ghost; that they, being delivered from thy wrath, may be received into the ark of thy church; and being steadfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity, may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, &c.' Will our opponents say that the participial clauses here refer to past, and not to future, blessings?—But on the whole subject of the church praying for the regeneration of her members, I would refer my readers to a paper in the Christian Observer for November 1815, p. 722.

Nor can the petition, ‘CREATE and make in us NEW and ‘contrite hearts,’ which occurs in the collect for Ash-Wednesday, be supposed to implore any blessing essentially distinct from this.

NOTE VIII. Page 55.

On St. John's criteria of regeneration.

ON the passages from St. John's Epistle, which have been here considered, I subjoin two extracts from Bishop Wilson's *Maxims of Piety*. Bishop Wilson is one of the authorities to which Dr. M. appeals, and the tract, from which my quotations are made, is circulated by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge. I give the two topics entire as they stand.

‘A REGENERATE PERSON cannot sin.*

‘That is, he has, by faith and the grace of God, got such an habit of holiness, such an inclination to virtue, that he cannot, upon any temptation, knowingly consent to transgress the laws of God. Having overcome the world, that is, all those temptations by which men are led to commit sin, *he is dead to sin*; that is, he can no more sin deliberately, than a dead man can breathe.’

‘REGENERATION.

‘The only certain proof of regeneration is victory. *He that is born of God overcometh the world.*† When we live by faith, when faith hath subdued the will, hath wrought repentance not to be repented of,‡ hath conquered our corruptions, then, to him that overcometh, will God give to eat of the tree of life.’

NOTE IX. Page 69.

As Dr. M. professed to consider both the liturgical formularies and the doctrinal writings of our church, I did not feel myself called upon to object very particularly to the order in which he chose to adduce them. Since, however,

* 1 John iii. 9.

† 1 John v. 4.

‡ 2 Cor. vii. 10.

we have seen subsequent writers on the same side confining their attention almost exclusively to the services, and scarcely at all noticing the articles and other didactic compositions of the church, I cannot forbear remarking this as a very unreasonable proceeding. Devotional compositions must be popular, and to a certain degree indefinite: and those which are designed for public use must likewise almost necessarily proceed, as those of our church do, upon the principle, and adopt the language, of charitable hope and judgment respecting the parties concerned in them.* On all these accounts, however exalted their excellence in their own particular line, devotional writings cannot be the best adapted to furnish accurate general conclusions on questions of doctrine: and in a church which has propounded professed and elaborate expositions of her doctrines, to neglect the latter in order to deduce our conclusions from the former, is a proceeding that cannot be vindicated.

Though Dr. M. has not done this to the extent that others have done, yet, while he spends six or seven pages on the offices, his notice of the articles is confined to the extent of a single page.

NOTE X. Page 76.

Opus Operatum.

DR. M. does not indeed consider baptism as working the effects which he ascribes to it by any intrinsic virtue of its own, but only as the medium of the Holy Spirit's operation: and so far his doctrine may differ from that of the *opus operatum*. But he certainly speaks of them as wrought without regard to the temper and 'inward acts' of the receiver, and in this, which is the main point at issue, the two doctrines fully coincide.—'They thought,' says Bishop Jewel, speaking of times coeval with the council of Carthage, 'the very outward work of baptism itself, only because it was done, without any further motion of the mind, was sufficient to remit their sins. This old error our adversaries of late years have taken up, and made it catholic, bearing the people in hand, that their mass itself, *ex opere operato*, only of itself, and because it is said, is available for the

* See c. x.—Dr Lawrence says, this might have been safely taken for granted in all cases where adults are concerned.

‘ remission of their sins. Thus they expound their own dream : *ex opere operato, id est, ex ipsa consecratione et oblatione, et sumptione venerabilis eucharistice, &c.* In *Manipulus Curatorum*, which not long since was thought to be ‘ a book most necessary for all parsons and curates, as ‘ containing all necessary doctrine for the church of God, ‘ it is written thus, *opus operatum est actus exercitatus circa sacramentum : sicut opus operatum in baptismo est inspersio, vel immersio aque, et prolatio verborum.* And therefore ‘ Cardinal Cajetan, at Augusta in Germany, requiring ‘ Doctor Luther to recant this article, said thus : *Fides non est necessaria accessuro ad eucharistiam* ; faith is not necessary for him that will receive the sacrament : meaning ‘ thereby that the very sacrament itself, only because it is ‘ ministered, is sufficient, although the receiver be utterly ‘ void of faith. And therefore the bishops in the late council of Trent have determined thus, *Si quis dixerit, &c.* ‘ If any man say that grace is not given by the sacraments ‘ of the New Testament, even for the work that is wrought, ‘ (*ex opere operato,*) but that faith only of the heavenly promise is sufficient to achieve grace, accursed be he.’ Reply to Harding, Art. 20, p. 438, edit. 1611.

NOTE XI. Page 80.

On the limitation of Dr. M.'s principles by subsequent writers.

WHEN I lament that Dr. M. should have ‘ so much confined his attention to the case of infant recipients of baptism,’ since he could scarcely have failed to perceive the extravagance of his principles when he came to apply them more particularly to adults, I would by no means be understood to imply, that he has at all *restricted* their application to infants. So far from excepting the case of adults, he positively includes it. The reader will have seen that he urges the ‘ sacramental character ’ of baptism, or its very nature as a sacrament, in proof that it must invariably convey grace, wherever it is ‘ rightly,’ or legitimately, administered : ’ he quotes the adult service, in common with that for infants ; he adduces the instances of Simon Magus and other adults ; pleads the necessity of ‘ the joint operation ’ of water and the Holy Spirit in order to regeneration ; and finally, pronounces ‘ any other than baptismal regeneration to be impossible in this world : ’ —from which

last positions it will follow, that if any person, infant or adult, has failed of finding regeneration in baptism, he can never become regenerate at all, and consequently, can never "see the kingdom of God?"—"The doctrine," he observes, 'being thus generally established, it rests with those, who contend for any other regeneration, *to show either the exception to its taking place at baptism, or that, having then taken place, it may afterwards be repeated.* . . . Let the authority then be adduced, Let it be shown from holy writ, that ANY PERSON, *to whom baptism was rightly administered, was not regenerated*; let it be shown, that any person, *having been once baptized, is described, under any circumstances whatever, of repentance, reformation, renovation, or conversion, to have been again regenerated.*'*

It is the more necessary to point this out, and to keep it in the reader's recollection, because all the writers on the same side, subsequently to Dr. M., have given up so much of his doctrine as relates to the infallible regeneration of adults, to whom baptism is 'legitimately administered;' or rather would have it believed that this had never formed any part of his doctrine. Archdeacon Daubeny confines the spiritual grace of baptism to those who put 'no impediment in the way,' or who are 'disposed for its reception.' Dr. Laurence, besides constantly adopting a different language from that of Dr. M. on this point, is pleased to say, that 'much of my work is occupied in refuting a position *which no one holds*—the position that supernatural grace is, in fact, necessarily and constantly conferred by baptism, in the case of adults, as well as in that of infants.' And the Dean of Chichester, complaining of the injurious misrepresentations to which he and his friends are subjected, states this as the first and principal, that 'such notions of the *inseparability* of baptism and regeneration, of the outward sign and the inward grace which it symbolizes, are attributed to them, as he is confident, *that no minister of our church ever did or ever could really assert.*'

All this, I trust, demonstrates that the answerers of Dr. Mant have not laboured in vain.†

* P. 40. The instances here appealed to must be those of adults, as scripture does not distinctly record any other.

† If any reader still doubt what is the real nature of Dr. M.'s doctrine upon this point, I refer him for demonstration to Mr. Faber's Reply to the Dean of Chichester, p. 16—24.

NOTE XII. Page 83.

THE following remark is very just : ‘ In the developement of his views, we do not find that Dr. Mant has fairly attempted to meet one difficulty, or to explain one opposing sentiment, not only in the authorities he has referred to, but even in the church formularies themselves. Has he reconciled the, at least, *apparently* conditional interrogatories before baptism, with the unconditional grant which he maintains of the spiritual grace afterwards? No. Has he explained in what sense we seem *absolutely* to promise the baptized *eternal life*, as well as regeneration, in that sacrament? No. Has he reconciled the liturgical views of our church with those which they *seem* to contradict, particularly in the twenty-fifth article? No. He has left every difficulty without exception to shift for itself.’

The *apparently* absolute promise of *eternal life* here referred to deserves more particular notice. It occurs in the exhortation which immediately follows the gospel in the service for infants. ‘ Doubt ye not therefore, but earnestly believe, that he will likewise favourably receive this present infant; that he will embrace him’ (in the service to be used after *private* baptism, ‘ *hath received, hath embraced,*’ &c.) ‘ with the arms of his mercy; that he will give unto him,’ or ‘ and (as he hath promised in his holy word) will give unto him the blessing of eternal life, and make him partaker of his everlasting kingdom.’ The whole of this language strongly confirms the interpretation which I have given of the services. It is not the language of absolute affirmation that every one baptized shall certainly obtain spiritual grace and everlasting life: it would confessedly be absurd to suppose that, as to the latter blessing: yet both one blessing and the other are placed under the same predicament: the persons addressed are taught to expect the one as surely as the other. It follows that the whole is addressed to their faith and hope, intended to excite humble trust and affiance in God’s mercy, rather than to give any unconditional assurance. ‘ *Doubt ye not,*’ do not distrust it, but on the contrary ‘ *earnestly believe,* and expect, that through God’s mercy so it shall be.’—‘ We would particularly refer to this interesting exhortation as exhibiting the very spirit and essence of the principle for which we contend, and as explicable, we are bold to say, upon *no other* principle. Upon what principle, we would only ask, can

‘ the church exhort the godfathers and godmothers absolutely “ not to doubt but earnestly believe ” that God, as he hath promised, “ will give unto the child *eternal life*, “ and ” actually “ make him partaker of his *everlasting kingdom* : ” nay, “ faithfully and devoutly to give thanks “ to God ” under this impression ? ’ *Christian Observer*, April 1816, p. 238, 240.

NOTE XIII. Page 83.

On considering the case of adult, before that of infant baptism.

THIS order has been strenuously objected to by Dr. Laurence, who considers me as deducing my interpretation of the church office for the baptism of infants entirely from what I had previously, and, as he admits, successfully, laboured to establish, as the true meaning of the office for adults. In this he is completely mistaken, as I may shew in another and more proper place.* Suffice it here to offer a few words in justification of the order which I have adopted.

Dr. L.’s objection to it is founded upon the undeniable fact, that the church offices were composed, and, in consequence stand in the prayer-book, in a different order. We are not, therefore, he says, to suppose the infant office ‘ conformed ’ to the adult, but, *vice versâ*, the adult to the infant : which is very true, but not at all contrary, I conceive, to any thing which I have written upon the subject. But, setting aside this single circumstance of the arrangement of the church services, (which is sufficiently accounted for by the fact, that no service for the baptism of adults was deemed necessary at all, till the period of the restoration,) every other consideration appears to me decidedly to recommend the course I have pursued. By considering the case of adults first, as I have stated in the text, we contemplate the subject ‘ *disencumbered* of any particular questions, ‘ which the case of infants might introduce into it.’ It is also the *natural* order. Baptism began with adults, professing repentance and faith, and from them descended to infants. To adults also, and adults of this description, was the language which pervades our baptismal services origi-

* Reply to Dr. Laurence.

nally applied; and it is as applied to them, that its meaning must first be traced, if it is ever to be interpreted rationally and consistently. And, finally, it is almost exclusively as it relates to adults, to subjects capable of repentance and faith, that both the sacred scriptures, and the didactic writings of our church, deliver the doctrine of baptism. Neither the scriptures, nor our articles, say a word of that doctrine as applied particularly to the case of infants: and the catechism contains no more upon the subject, than that answer to the question, ‘Why then are infants baptized, ‘who by reason of their tender age cannot perform’ repentance and faith?—which I have not omitted to consider in its proper place. Should we attempt, therefore, as Dr. L. recommends, to deduce the doctrine of adult from infant, and not that of infant from adult baptism, we must draw conclusions without premises, and rush forward in the dark, without any ground to support our steps.

I would only further observe, that to deduce the *doctrine* of infant baptism from adult is one thing, and to suppose ‘the *office* of infant baptism conformed to the principles of ‘an office of adult baptism, which did not at the time exist,’ or to ‘limit the sense of the original by that of the copy,’ is another, and a widely different thing. The former I *would* do; the latter I *would not*.

NOTE XIV. Page 87.

I HERE argue, that, when the church so earnestly prays that spiritual regeneration may accompany baptism, she implies that baptism might be administered and no spiritual regeneration conveyed. Mr. Daubeney fully sanctions the principle of this reasoning. He says, ‘that children who ‘have been made children of grace, and heirs of eternal ‘happiness by baptism,’ may ‘continue in that state of ‘grace and heirship’ is ‘an event which the church earnestly and repeatedly prays for, *and consequently an event ‘which she by no means takes for granted.*’ Considerations, p. 37. And again: ‘When the church prays that “all ‘things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow”’ in the baptized party, ‘she at least supposes that the contrary ‘may be the case.’ p. 39. Does it not equally follow, that when the church prays, that an infant coming to baptism ‘may be washed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost,’ and ‘receive remission of sins by spiritual regeneration,’ she

‘ at least supposes that the contrary may be the case ? ’
 Yet this he will not allow : and he even ridicules my conclusions drawn from such premises : p. 72, 73.

NOTE XV. Page 95.

*On the clause ‘ truly repenting and coming to him by faith,’
 in the adult service.*

Dr. LAURENCE having quoted nearly the whole of the preceding page, in which I most distinctly develope my views of the meaning of the church in her service for adults, observes upon it : ‘ All this is perfectly correct and reasonable ; ‘ but,’ he adds, (how accurately the reader must judge,) ‘ it is nothing more or less than what all parties have uniformly held upon the same subject. Had’ the author ‘ rested here, no ground of objection could have existed.’ — *Vindication*, p. 19.

It may be remarked, that this avowal of Dr. L.’s (to which he does not always very consistently adhere,) seems to be made almost exclusively on the ground of the clause quoted from the adult service, in the passage to which this note is annexed. No doubt that clause is very important, and very decisive : it convinces Dr. L. that the office in which it is found proceeds upon quite a different principle from the infant office, in which, of course, it is *not* found ; and it has impressed subsequent writers somewhat in the same way. Yet it does not appear that it ever at all arrested the attention of Dr. Mant ! It did not prevent his quoting the adult service as equally applicable to his purpose with that for infants. Indeed he does not at all notice this passage.

At the same time, however important it may be, the reader will have observed that my argument by no means rests upon the clause in question. I adduce it as a decisive *confirmation* of conclusions, at which I had previously arrived on other grounds. Nor will the least use appear to have been made of it in the next chapter, which treats of the case of infants, and the office appointed for their baptism. I confine my application of it entirely to the office in which it stands. With what injustice, then, does Dr. L. treat me, when he represents me as ‘ urging, that our reformers in ‘ the reign of Edward VI. presumed, that infants, brought

‘ to baptism possessed the previous requisites of repentance and faith, or any equivalent requisite, respecting which the office compiled by them is wholly silent, MERELY because in the reign of Charles II. a CLAUSE of that description was admitted into another baptismal office, adapted to very different persons !’—Vindication, p. 16.

NOTE XVI. Page 97.

‘ Legal Fiction.’

DR. LAURENCE shall furnish, and from a high authority, an illustration of my meaning in the use of the above term. ‘ The answer given by the conforming party in the commission,’ at the Savoy conference, in the reign of Charles II., ‘ who, as far as the act of revision proceeded, constituted what in this respect all sides must be agreed in denominating *the church* itself, was thus worded. “ The effect of children’s baptism depends neither upon their own *present actual* faith and repentance, which the catechism saith expressly they cannot perform ; nor upon the faith and repentance of their natural parents or pro-parents, or of their godfathers or godmothers, but upon the ordinance and institution of Christ. *But it is requisite, that, when they come to age, they should perform those conditions of faith and repentance,* for which also their godfathers and godmothers charitably undertook on their behalf. And what *they* do for the infant in this case, *the infant himself is truly said to do, as in the courts of this kingdom daily the infant does answer by his guardian ; and it is usual for to do homage by proxy, and for princes to marry by proxy.* See St. Austin, Ep. 21 ad Bonifacium.”’—Quoted by Dr. Laurence, Vindic. p. 124, from Proceedings of the commission of review at the restoration.

The latter part of this quotation precisely explains my intention in the *legal fiction*. Some preceding parts countenance other sentiments which I have avowed, and which Dr. L. has impugned.

In the former edition of my Inquiry, I had here said, simply with reference to the questions addressed as to the infant, and answered in his name by the sponsors, ‘ It is *as if* the soul of the child were considered as transferred to his sponsor, and as speaking in him and by him.’ This,

being a mere illustration, and not, as Dr. L. would have it thought, any part of my argument, and having been ungenerously misrepresented by him, is now omitted, without any detriment to my reasoning.

Wheatley in his *Illustration of the Common Prayer* (Clarendon-press edition, 1794, p. 317, 320, &c.) treats this whole subject of the stipulations in a manner well suited to illustrate and confirm my reasonings. 'There is,' he observes, 'a mutual covenant in this sacrament between God and man:' and, 'in the making of a covenant, the express consent of both parties is required.' And then, having 'produced the warrant from Scripture, whereby it appears that God is willing to receive infants into his favour;' &c. he proceeds: 'And now, no doubt remaining but that God is ready and willing to perform his part of the covenant, so soon as the child shall promise on his; the priest addresses himself to the godfathers and godmothers to promise for him, and from them takes security that the infant shall observe the conditions that are required of him. And in this there is nothing strange or new; nothing which is not used almost in every contract. . . . Much after the same manner, whenever kings are crowned in their infancy, some of the nobility, deputed to represent them take the usual oaths. The same do ambassadors for their principals at the ratifying of leagues or articles; and guardians for their minors, who are bound by the law to stand to what is contracted for them.—' Let us now proceed to consider the form of vicarious stipulation that is here used. It is drawn up all along by way of question and answer, which seems to have been the method even in the days of the apostles; for St. Peter calls baptism "the answer of a good conscience:" and, in the primitive church, queries were always put to the persons baptized, which persons at age answered themselves, and children by their representatives, who are therefore to answer in the first person, *I renounce, &c. because the contract is properly made with the child.* For which reason, in the first book of King Edward, the priest is ordered *to demand of the child* these several questions proposed; and, in our present liturgy, though the minister directs himself to the godfathers and godmothers, yet he speaks by them *to the child* as is manifestly apparent from the third question, *wilt thou be baptized in this faith?* and consequently *the child is supposed to return* the several answers which are made by the godfathers.'

NOTE XVII. Page 99.

I BEG to have it observed, that my arguments concerning the service for infant baptism are not at all, as Dr. Laurence would represent them, *inferences* from what has been proved concerning the service for adults. They are drawn directly from the contents of the service itself; particularly from the engagements required and made in the name of the child. I do not indeed *repeat* at length the conclusions which have been drawn from the same forms as they occur elsewhere: that were superfluous: but it is manifest that they must furnish the same deductions in one place as in another. Once indeed I refer to the adult service, but it is merely to repel an inference, attempted to be drawn from language in the infant service, which the same language confessedly does not warrant, when it occurs in the service for adults.

NOTE XVIII. Page 100.

The Stipulations, Mr. Daubeny and others on the case of Infants.

WE have seen above the stress laid upon the professions and stipulations made in baptism. The church (after the example of St. Peter,) virtually suspends every thing upon the sincerity with which they are made, both in her articles, her catechism, and her services. In her homily also on Swearing (which may be safely attributed to the pen of Cranmer,) she does the same. ‘*By holy promises, with calling the name of God to witness, we be made lively members of Christ, when we profess his religion, receiving the sacrament of baptism.*’—In the extracts from Bishop Hooper, given in c. x. below, the reader will find this doctrine expressly applied by the venerable reformer and martyr to the case of infants. ‘*Thus be the infants examined concerning repentance and faith, before they be baptized with water; at the contemplation of which faith, God purgeth the soul.*’

I would here present to my reader the views taken by Mr. Daubeny of the case of infants, and the intention of the church in the language which she uses concerning them. ‘*The profession made for them,*’ he says, (*Considerations,*

p. 71.) ‘is received in their behalf as sincere. There is consequently, *in the eye of charity*, no impediment in the way of their receiving internal sanctification or spiritual regeneration by baptism. And therefore our church speaks of every child that she has baptized as regenerate.’ Again, p. 73: ‘His prayer *being put up in faith* and in the name of Christ, the minister concludes, on the ground of that assurance given Matt. xxi. 22 . . . that his petition has been heard and granted,’ and accordingly ‘returns thanks to God for the same; and in consequence feels himself authorized to declare the then baptized child to be actually regenerate.’—Yet again, p. 87: ‘The church of England proceeds in her service *on the supposition* that the professions of the infant by his sponsors in baptism are, to his advantage, accepted at the throne of grace *as sincere*. The infant is therefore considered by her as standing, in the eye of God, on the same ground with the true believer in Christ.’—The reader will probably think that he here perceives an indefinitely near approach to my statements.—‘The prayer of faith,’ ‘the eye of charity,’ ‘the supposition,’ ‘the profession received as sincere;’ all these exceedingly resemble my terms, as well as my sentiments. Mr. Daubeny, however, thinks otherwise, and, what is not a little extraordinary, immediately annexes to the last sentence but one, here quoted, the following conclusion: ‘*The church, therefore, ASSUMES NOTHING on this occasion, but pronounces on the case as it is then presented to her!*’ (p. 73.)

Dean Bethell explains his sentiments as follows: ‘We hold that this is invariably the case in infant baptism;’ namely, ‘that spiritual regeneration accompanies outward baptism;’ ‘because we believe that those qualifications which are required of persons to be baptized (*viz. faith and repentance*) *are mercifully imputed by God* to those infants, who by reason of their tender years cannot perform them.’ *Apology*, p. 5.

Dr. Laurence perceives no necessity for ‘imputation.’ He finds the only requisite qualification for infants in ‘that *innocency*, or freedom from *actual* guilt, which is inseparable’ from their ‘state of being.’ And what is more, he finds this qualification of *innocence* distinctly ‘pointed out,’ and ‘clearly explained’ by the church herself, and that in a service, which lays the very foundation for infant baptism in the fact, that ‘all men are conceived and born in sin;’ and which repeatedly speaks of the infant being

‘ released from his sins,’ or prays that he may ‘ receive remission of sins by spiritual regeneration.’—*Vindication*, p. 115, &c.

NOTE XIX. Page 101.

THE following extract adds so much explanation and confirmation to the doctrine I have endeavoured to establish, and at the same time so well anticipates some more recent refinements of Dr. M.’s principles, that I hesitate not to insert it, notwithstanding its length.

‘ But the question remains, with respect to infants, in what sense the church here also thanks God for the regeneration of the baptized, and seems to assume the existence of the divine life in their souls. The case is peculiar, and seems to be left undetermined by the church itself. For it is remarkable, that having settled the question of the efficacy of baptism in her twenty-seventh article, as it respects adults, on the ground of faith and grace previously existing, and then confirmed and increased, she simply adds, “ The baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ: ” and no further explanation is given. Now we think ourselves quite at liberty to argue from this circumstance, that she intended the case of infant baptism to stand upon the same principle as that of adults. *Had she intended to make so prodigious a difference between the two cases, as that regeneration in one should be only a conditional, and in the other an absolute and unconditional grant, is it possible she should have wholly suppressed such an intention; or have left it to be distantly collected from uncertain expressions in her baptismal service; which expressions moreover stood only for a conditional grant in the former case of adult baptism? ** The most rational solution to our minds is, that she intended the same thing in both cases; and since it had been settled in controversies as old as the Pelagian, that *the same words* were to be used in infant and in adult baptism, she seems to have wisely governed herself by antiquity on this point, and to have employed the same words in both cases, and in both cases with the same view.

‘ How, then, is the *conditional* thanksgiving for infant regeneration to be understood by the minister and the

* See Notes XI. and XV. above.

bystanders? We answer, It is to be understood as an expression of confidence in the mercy of Almighty God that he hath not been, and will not be, wanting "on his part" in affording every means for the full and entire regeneration of this infant. The pious parent sees in this sacrament a seal and token of all that he *expects* from the promises and the mercies of God in Jesus Christ. He sees in it a covenant-seal of that pardon and free justification which he hopes indeed, through divine grace, may be granted to all children, whether baptized or not, dying in their infancy; but which he doubts not, in answer to his fervent and faithful prayers, is the sure portion of his own. He thanks God for the outward and visible token of that inward and spiritual grace, and for the assurance given in this sacrament of a new and spiritual life, in answer to faithful prayer. He presumes further to expect that, in answer to such prayer, and through the medium of his instructions, the child "shall lead the rest of its life according to this beginning:" and in contemplation of this issue, he undertakes, not rashly but as a humble believer, to thank God for the event which he anticipates. The child in baptism has "the sacrament of faith," as St. Austin speaks: the parent looks forward in faithful and joyful expectation to the reality of that faith, of which he is now assured that the means, on God's part, will not be wanting. He beholds afar off, indeed, but in lively hope, every feature of the new and divine life in the soul of his child; and even gladly anticipates the time when, according to his baptismal prayers, he shall at length meet "the children that God has given him" in the land of heavenly rest, there to dwell together with God in life everlasting through Jesus Christ.

If, indeed, it shall appear hereafter but too manifest that the divine life has no existence in the soul of the child; if instruction shall be found vain, and every effort fruitless, to kindle, instrumentally, the sparks of faith and heavenly love within him; still a parent will not utterly despair. The divine life not yet imparted may be imparted hereafter. The baptismal prayers, the continued supplications and unceasing endeavours, of the faithful parent may still at some future time take effect. His baptism still remains valid as an ordinance: and at the hour of regeneration itself, the first dawnings of faith and love shall be hailed as in connection with the seal previously set, and nothing shall prevent the now repent-

ing and returning convert from taking to himself the full
 privilege of that Christian birth, and heavenly adoption,
 which in reversion, had been then testified to him. And
 with this perfectly agree the answers put into the mouth
 of the child, in reference to this very rite in our admirable
 catechism: "wherein (*i. e.* in baptism) I was made a mem-
 ber of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the
 kingdom of heaven;" and again, "I heartily thank our
 heavenly Father, who hath called me to this state of sal-
 vation through Jesus Christ our Saviour;" and again,
 "being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath,
 we are hereby (*i. e.* by regeneration, the inward and spi-
 ritual grace) made the children of grace." We say, that
 all these answers tend precisely to the same point; namely,
 to put into the mouth of the child, now supposed capable
 of instruction, the same language of faith and hope which
 before had been adopted by the parent himself. The
 hope now thought fit to be inculcated on the child, is not
 indeed the senseless assurance that a mysterious change
 had already, unconditionally, passed on his heart and
 disposition, in a rite where he had been as wholly passive
 as the water which sprinkled him; but that, in consider-
 ation of his faith now supposed sincere, his resolutions
 steadfast, his prayers hearty, and his mind spiritual, he
 may look upon himself as a new creature in Christ Jesus;
 and that having had the sign and seal in his baptism, and
 his present feelings testifying to the inward and spiritual
 grace existing in his soul, nothing need prevent his taking
 to himself the choicest blessings of the new covenant of
 grace, and, as Dr. Mant has expressed it, now safely be-
 coming "filled with all joy and peace in believing."

After all, should the child, notwithstanding the faith and
 prayers of the parent and the church, the sound instruc-
 tions built on a spiritual catechism, the solemn outward re-
 cognition of his baptismal vows in the rite of confirma-
 tion, and all other means of grace, continue to the end,
 to all appearance, "dead in trespasses and sins," and ob-
 stinately opposed through a perverse will to every offer of
 divine grace; we cannot still consider the thanksgiving
 at his baptism as wholly lost, much less a mockery of the
 divine Majesty. "Into *whatsoever* house ye enter *first*
 say, Peace be to this house. And, if the son of peace be
 there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn
 to you again." The thanksgiving, like the invocation of
 faith, shall be accepted in behalf of the offerer, if not of

‘ the object ; and his “ prayer shall return into his own
 ‘ bosom.” Neither can we conceive it to be in the least de-
 ‘ gree necessary to frame the hypothesis of a barren, inef-
 ‘ ficient, external regeneration, as much without all evidence
 ‘ as without all profit, supposed to have taken place in
 ‘ every individual at baptism, in order to justify the hope-
 ‘ ful assumption of that inward, legitimate, and effectual
 ‘ change represented by it, which, in perfect analogy to the
 ‘ divine proceedings, and to the true nature of a sa-
 ‘ crament, may take place at any other period in the Chris-
 ‘ tian’s life.

‘ If for want of a spiritual view of their own admirable
 ‘ liturgy, subscribed originally by hands little less than
 ‘ apostolical, and written, we had almost said, with the
 ‘ blood of its compilers, mistaken men take up with the
 ‘ most inadequate sense of its profound expressions, the
 ‘ fault is surely not in the liturgy but in themselves.
 ‘ What use has not been made by the same persons even of
 ‘ the scriptures ! And if, for centuries together, those
 ‘ blessed writings have lain hid under a mass of false inter-
 ‘ pretation, or suffered to pine in fruitless neglect ; what
 ‘ wonder, if for want of suitable instruction in the nature
 ‘ of a liturgy built upon them, even good men should
 ‘ have sometimes found themselves burdened in the use of
 ‘ it, and the enemies of the church should take occasion for
 ‘ a short-lived and inglorious triumph ? The expressions
 ‘ in our baptismal, as in every other service, are scriptural
 ‘ expressions, and intended for the use of spiritual persons.
 ‘ As such we believe them to be liable to exactly the same
 ‘ abuse, on the principles of carnal liberty, with the scrip-
 ‘ tures themselves ; but capable also of yielding similar
 ‘ edification in their legitimate use. The scriptures em-
 ‘ brace whole bodies of men under the appellation of saints,
 ‘ elect, faithful, &c. not because they intended nothing
 ‘ more by those expressions than outward official distinc-
 ‘ tions on the one hand ; nor because, on the other, they
 ‘ meant to assert that every individual “ who named the
 ‘ name of Christ, had departed from all iniquity.” They
 ‘ affix peremptorily and unreservedly the appropriate grace
 ‘ to both the sacraments, sometimes with little or no guard
 ‘ at all, but an implied one ; not because they held the
 ‘ grace always to follow the sign, nor, on the contrary, be-
 ‘ cause they meant to merge the sign, as insignificant, in
 ‘ the thing signified. Nay, St. Paul renders thanks to
 ‘ God for whole churches, “ because that their faith grow-
 ‘ eth exceedingly, and the charity of *every one of them all*

‘ towards each other aboundeth ; ’ when we are sure from
 ‘ his other expressions and his whole doctrine that he must
 ‘ have known, at the moment of thanksgiving, of some
 ‘ one, and many more might be of that class, who “ had
 ‘ a form of godliness and denied the power thereof.” And
 ‘ even when he expresses an undoubted “ confidence,” to
 ‘ appearance, “ of this very thing, that He who had be-
 ‘ gun a good work in them, would perform it until the day
 ‘ of Jesus Christ,” must he not have feared that (like that
 ‘ very Demas whom he had associated with himself in si-
 ‘ milar congratulations,) many amongst his most hopeful
 ‘ converts might afterwards “ forsake him, having loved
 ‘ this present world.”—The principle, then, most evidently,
 ‘ on which such thanks were rendered and such confidence
 ‘ expressed, was clearly a hypothetical one: nay, we will
 ‘ not say so much hypothetical, as a principle of *faith*, of
 ‘ strong and fervent faith, grounded on the promise, “ If
 ‘ thou believest, all things are possible to him that believeth.”
 ‘ It was a strong expression of hope, even of “ hope to
 ‘ the end.” It was an acceptance of the assurances which
 ‘ God had made to him: and even when these failed of
 ‘ their accomplishment, still he was not discouraged from
 ‘ laying again the foundations of the same hope, “ building
 ‘ himself up again in his most holy faith, praying in the
 ‘ Holy Ghost,” and believing that his very disappointments
 ‘ would work for his good, preserve him “ in the love of
 ‘ God and in the patient waiting for Jesus Christ.”’

Christian Observer, 1816, p. 235—237.

*View taken by Non-conformists of the Church Catechism and
 Baptismal Service.*

As certain modern dissenters, sensible that they can thus most advantageously assail the church, concur with the adherents of Dr. Mant in contending, that his is the only proper interpretation of her catechism and baptismal services; and that the non-conformists of Charles the second’s days had no idea of such a sense as the opponents of Dr. M. would put upon these compositions; it becomes more than a matter of curiosity to learn, what were the real sentiments of those non-conformists upon the question; and under what view of our formularies they refused to receive

them. On these particulars we are furnished with important information from one of their leading managers at the Savoy conference, the celebrated Richard Baxter. ‘Withal the godfathers and godmothers *personate the child, as believing in Christ and renouncing sin*; and that without any authority for it, either from natural right or positive law. And the ordinance of baptism will seem to be put upon that insufficient bottom, by any one who sedately compares the office for that purpose and the church catechism. For the purpose’ (meaning the promise and vow) ‘of godfathers and godmothers, *in the child’s name, is, in both, represented as the foundation of baptismal dedication, and the ground of the claim of the benefits and blessings thence arising.*’—Baxter’s Life and Times, 8vo. vol. ii. p. 211.

These persons, then, rejected the services of the church taking as nearly as possible the same view of her intentions in them as we do: and, had the church commissioners deemed it an erroneous view, it is to be supposed that they would have pointed out the error.—With the opinion expressed of the untenableness of the doctrine of the church, in this view of it, we have here no concern.

NOTE XX. Page 131.

Sentiments of Bishop Jewel.

As soon as the former edition of this work had left the press, I applied myself to collect the opinions of our more eminent theological writers on the subjects of which it treats; and I had made some progress when the publication of my excellent friend and fellow-labourer, Mr. Biddulph, in reply to Dr. Mant, came to my hands. In his appendix I found myself completely anticipated, and more than anticipated: so that I immediately laid aside my design. The authority, however, of one distinguished ornament of our church, at the period of the reformation, Bishop Jewel, is so important; and what he has written upon the subject may be considered as so complete a summary, and, at the same time, explanation, of all that doctrine of the more ancient divines, which our opponents would represent as entirely on their side, though it is, in fact, decidedly against them; that I shall here exhibit the substance of my collections from him.

I would first premise a few sentences concerning Jewel and his works. ‘This prelate, Bishop Burnet affirms,

and it seems the general sentiment, "was the first, and much the best, writer of Elizabeth's time." He "had a great share in all that was then done, particularly in compiling the second book of Homilies." "His works," therefore, his Lordship observes, may with "great reason" be considered "as a very sure commentary on our articles."* But the work, which especially immortalized his name, was his celebrated "Apology of the English Church." It was written at the instigation, and by the common advice, of the whole body of divines that were assembled for the purpose of effecting the reformation. It passed through many editions, and was published, both at home and abroad, in various languages. It was repeatedly vindicated, when attacked by the enemies of the church, and contributed more, it is believed, towards its establishment, than any other publication of the age. And, as historians assure us, in such equal esteem, and of such equal authority, with the thirty-nine articles themselves, was it in those days holden, that a design was entertained of its being joined with them.†—Such was the writer whose sentiments we propose to collect.‡

I. *Of sacraments.* 'Christ hath ordained them, that by
' them he might set before our eyes the mysteries of our
' salvation, and might *more strongly confirm* the faith, which
' we have in his blood, and might *seal his grace* in our
' hearts. As princes' seals confirm and warrant their deeds

* Pref to Exp. of Articles.

† Strype.

‡ The following are the terms in which the writer of an article, before referred to, in the Quarterly Review, speaks of Jewel.—'Had all the
' serious and learned divines of our church to give their voice in favour
' of the one man whom they would hold forth as the greatest light of
' the reformation—as the person whose mind had most fully comprehended and laboured upon the whole compass of reformed truth, and
' whose writings do still preserve the most highly sanctioned memorial
' of it;—we know not whether they would name any other than
' him, who having received from the great fathers of the reformation
' the office of unfolding, complete in all its parts, that truth which they
' with their faithful voice had proclaimed among us, first reduced and
' recorded our whole national creed with its illustration and evidence—
' Bishop Jewel. He, with a more leisurely survey of the bearing of
' every doctrine, than could be taken even by the leading reformers
' themselves, who, in the first effort and agony of their work, with rude
' and noble simplicity, threw down the fabric of error, and hewed the
' granite from the quarry, and brought it for the building, he, coming in
' the close of their labours, united and perfected all that they had prepared or done, as much as any one man can be said to have done it.
' To the theological inquirer, he is a master-builder of the system of our
' doctrine. His formal and deliberate judgment, therefore, is of the greatest value.'

‘ and charters, so do the sacraments witness unto our conscience, that God’s promises are true, and shall continue for ever. Thus doth God make known his secret purpose to his church : first, he *declareth* his mercy by his word, then he *sealeth* it, and *assureth* it by his sacraments. In the word we *have* his promises : in the sacraments we *see* them.’ *Treatise on the Sacraments*, 1570 : edit. 1611, p. 261.

His account is similar in the Apology. He there says : ‘ Nor do we doubt to call them a kind of *visible words*, the *signets of righteousness*, and symbols of grace.’ Undoubtedly they are, as he says, much more than ‘ bare signs ;’ but here is nothing like making them necessarily to convey grace.

‘ When God would witness and stablish to Abraham and his seed after him the promise of his mercy, he himself ordained a sacrament to *confirm* the same . . . Thus God ordained the sacrament of circumcision. This sacrament was a *seal of God’s promise* to Abraham, and a *seal of Abraham’s faith and obedience* towards God.’ . . . St. Paul saith, “ Abraham received the sign of circumcision as the seal of the righteousness of the faith, which he had when he was uncircumcised.” *Ib.* p. 262, 263.

II. *Explanation of the language of the Fathers.* ‘ Saint Augustine saith : “ If sacraments had not a certain likeness and representation of the things whereof they be sacraments, then indeed they were no sacraments.” And, *because of this likeness* which they have with the things they represent, they be oftentimes *termed by the names of the things themselves.*’ (Thus baptism is called regeneration.) *Ib.* p. 262.

Thus also in his Defence of the Apology : ‘ We must consider that the learned fathers, in their treatise of the sacraments, sometimes use the outward sign instead of the thing itself that is signified ; sometimes they use the thing signified instead of the sign. As, for example, sometimes they name *Christ’s blood* instead of *the water* ; sometimes they name *the water* instead of *Christ’s blood*. This figure is called *metonymia*, that is to say, an exchange of names, and is much used among the learned, specially speaking of the sacraments. *Defence of Apol.* p. 218.*

III. *High language concerning baptism.* Jewel observes that the fathers used ‘ vehement and great words’ concerning the

* He shews that the fathers thus expound the words, *Hoc est corpus meum*, “ this is my body,” *hoc est figura corporis mei*, ‘ that is to say, this is a figure of my body.’ *Def.* p. 14. Can there be a doubt that he would have explained the sentence ‘ baptism is regeneration in the same way—it is ‘ a sign of regeneration?’

sacraments. And in this he does not scruple to imitate them.

‘ Such a change is made in the sacrament of baptism. Through the power of God’s working the water is turned into blood. They that be washed in it receive the remission of sins : their robes are made clean in the blood of the Lamb. The water itself is nothing : but by the working of God’s Spirit, the death and merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ are thereby assured unto us.’ *On the Sacraments*, p. 266.

‘ Baptism therefore is our regeneration or new birth, whereby we are born anew in Christ, and are made the sons of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven : it is the sacrament of the remission of sins, and of that washing which we have by the blood of Christ.’ *Ib.* p. 265. And p. 263 : ‘ The grace of God doth always work with his sacraments : but we are taught not to seek that grace in the sign, but to assure ourselves by receiving the sign, that is given us by the thing signified.’

IV. *The limitation to such language always implied, and sometimes expressed.*—‘ So saith Cyril : “ As water throughly heated with fire burneth as well as fire ; so the waters which wash the body of him that is baptized, are changed into divine power, by the working of the Holy Ghost.”’ The very next sentence expresses the limitation. It is as follows : ‘ So said Leo, sometime a bishop of Rome : Christ hath given like pre-eminence to the water of baptism, as he gave to his mother. For that power of the Highest, and that overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, which brought to pass that Mary should bring forth the Saviour of the world, hath also brought to pass, that the water should bear anew or regenerate *him that believeth*.”’ *Ib.* p. 263.

And the preceding page not only makes this limitation, but explicitly declares that the outward sign may be separated from the inward grace, and that no spiritual benefit is conveyed by this, or any other sacrament, except to him who ‘ receives it rightly.’ ‘ If any man have the outward seal, and have not the FAITH thereof sealed within his heart, it AVAILETH HIM NOT : he is but a HYPOCRITE and DISSEMBLER. So the circumcision of the foreskin of the flesh taught them to mortify their fleshly affections, and to cut off the thoughts and devices of their wicked hearts. Therefore said Stephen to the Jews, *Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in hearts and ears,*’ &c. P. 262.

Again : ‘ So do the FAITHFUL receive the fruit and comfort by the sacraments, which the WICKED and UNGODLY neither consider nor receive.’ P. 263.

‘ And again, ‘ Likewise saith S. Hierome, “ If any man hath received only the bodily washing of *water*, that is outwardly seen with the eye, he hath not put on the Lord Jesus Christ.”

‘ It is the covenant, and promise, and mercy of God; which clotheth us with immortality, assureth our resurrection; by which we receive regeneration, forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. His word *declareth* his love towards us; and that word is *sealed* and made good by baptism. Our faith, which are baptized, and our continuance in the profession which we have made, establisheth in us this grace which we receive. As it is said, “ True baptism standeth not so much in washing of the body, as in the faith of the heart.” As the doctrine of the apostles hath taught us, saying, “ By faith purifying their hearts.” And in another place, “ Baptism saveth us, not the putting away, &c.” Therefore Hierome saith, “ They that receive not baptism with perfect faith RECEIVE THE WATER, BUT THE HOLY GHOST THEY RECEIVE NOT.” Ib. p. 266. Also *Defence of Apol.* p. 217, 218; where it is added from St. Augustine, “ Unde ista tanta virtus, &c. Whence is all this so great virtue, or power of the water, that it toucheth the body, and washeth the heart, but by the working of the word? *not for that it is spoken (by the minister) but for that it is believed (of the faithful) ?*”

‘ We say that the sacraments of Christ, without faith, do not profit.’ *Defence of Apol.* p. 282. ‘ The merits of Christ’s death are conveyed unto us by God, and received by us. God conveyeth them to us *only of his mercy*, and wereceive them *only by faith*. But the ways whereby either to procure God’s mercy, or to enkindle our faith, are many. . . . Among other causes the sacraments serve specially to direct and to aid our faith. . . . All this notwithstanding, we say, It is neither the work of the priest, *nor the nature of the sacrament,** as of itself, that maketh us partakers of Christ’s death, but *ONLY the faith of the receiver.*’ Ib. p. 284.

‘ St. Augustine saith: “ Qui indigne accipit, &c.” Whoso receiveth baptism unworthily, receiveth his judgment, and not his health.” *Reply to Harding’s Answer,* p. 284.

V. *That the inward grace may be separated from the outward sign, and may precede baptism.*—‘ In baptism, as the

* Compare Dr. Mant on ‘ the sacramental character.’

‘ one part of that holy mystery is Christ’s blood, so is the
 ‘ other part the material water. Neither are these parts
 ‘ joined together in place, but in mystery; and therefore
 ‘ they be OFTENTIMES SEVERED, and THE ONE IS RECEIVED
 ‘ WITHOUT THE OTHER.’ *Reply*, p. 285. He says indeed, ‘ It
 ‘ is granted of all, without contradiction, that one end of all
 ‘ sacraments is to join us unto God;’ yet he presently adds;
 ‘ In plain speech it is not the receiving of the sacrament
 ‘ that worketh our joining with God: for whosoever is not
 ‘ joined unto God before he receive the SACRAMENTS, he
 ‘ eateth and drinketh his own judgment. The sacraments
 ‘ be seals and witnesses, and not properly the causes of this
 ‘ conjunction.’ *Reply*, p. 20, 21.

‘ Touching the virtue or power of this sacrament’ of
 baptism, ‘ if Mr. Harding mean thereby the outward ele-
 ‘ ment of the water, he knoweth, or may easily know, it
 ‘ is a common resolution amongst all his own school doc-
 ‘ tors, *Gratia Dei non est alligata sacramentis*: “ The
 ‘ grace of God is not tied to any sacraments.” The meaning
 ‘ thereof is this: That God is able to work salvation both
 ‘ with them, and without them.’ *Defence of Apol.* p. 218.

He says, indeed, in a general way, concerning infants,
 ‘ For this cause are infants baptized, because they are born
 ‘ in sin, and cannot become spiritual, but by this new birth
 ‘ of the water and the Spirit.’ *On the Sacraments*, p. 265.
 Yet two pages afterwards he discountenances such as ‘ make
 ‘ doubt of those infants, the children of the faithful, which
 ‘ depart before baptism, whether they be saved or not;’
 and teaches us that we may rather ‘ thus safely reason:’
 ‘ Our children are the children of God. He is our God,
 ‘ and the God of our seed. They be under the covenant
 ‘ with us.* The soberest way is to speak least, and to leave
 ‘ them to the judgment and mercy of God.’ P. 267.

As is justly observed in Mr. Biddulph’s appendix,
 ‘ The extracts here given are sufficient to prove that, not-
 ‘ withstanding the strong figurative language which our re-
 ‘ formers have sometimes used, they meant not to affirm,
 ‘ nor did the catholic fathers, in their opinion, ever mean

* N. B. ‘ Under the covenant,’ though not having ‘ the seal’ of it.

‘ to affirm, a necessary connection between baptism and
 ‘ internal regeneration; or that baptism is, as Dr. Mant
 ‘ contends, *exclusively* and *inclusively* the vehicle of spiri-
 ‘ tual grace. The high metonymic language of the Greek
 ‘ and Latin fathers of the primitive church, when speaking
 ‘ of the two sacraments, gave rise to the twofold error of
 ‘ popery, viz. that of spiritual regeneration as inseparably
 ‘ connected with water baptism, and that of transubstantia-
 ‘ tion as connected (and that also inseparably,) with the
 ‘ celebration of the eucharist. It appears to me that these
 ‘ must stand or fall together.’

NOTE XXI. Page 134.

The Fathers.

SEVERAL passages illustrative of the sentiments of the fathers, and shewing the limitations to their strong language, which they always understand, and sometimes express, have appeared in the extracts from Jewel. I shall here subjoin a few more, derived in general, from sources which even our opponents will not object to.

The first is an extract from St. Augustine given in Wall, part I. c. xv. ‘ Therefore, as in Abraham the righteousness
 ‘ of faith went before, and circumcision the seal of the righ-
 ‘ teousness of faith came after; so in Cornelius *the spiritual*
 ‘ *sanctification by the gift of the Holy Spirit went before*, and
 ‘ the sacrament of regeneration by the laver of baptism came
 ‘ after. And, as in Isaac, who was circumcised the eighth
 ‘ day, the seal of the righteousness of faith went before,
 ‘ and (as he was a follower of his father’s faith) the
 ‘ righteousness itself, the seal whereof had gone before in
 ‘ his infancy, came after; so in infants baptized the sacra-
 ‘ ment of regeneration *goes before* and (IF THEY PUT IN
 ‘ PRACTICE THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION) conversion of the
 ‘ heart, the mystery whereof went before in their body,
 ‘ comes after. . . . By all which it appears that the sacra-
 ‘ ment of baptism is one thing, and conversion of the heart
 ‘ another: but that the salvation of a person is completed
 ‘ by both of them. And, if one of these be wanting, we
 ‘ are not to think that it follows, that the other is wanting;
 ‘ since one may be without the other in an infant, and the
 ‘ other was without that in the thief: God almighty making
 ‘ up both in one and the other case that which was not

‘ wilfully wanting. But when either of these is wilfully wanting, it involves the person in guilt. And baptism indeed may be had where conversion of the heart is wanting; but conversion of the heart, though it may be where baptism is not had, cannot be where it is *contemned*: for that is by no means to be called conversion of the heart to God, where the sacrament of God is contemned.’

Here we may observe, 1. That St. Augustine considers ‘ conversion of the heart unto God ’ as the inward and spiritual grace, or thing signified in baptism. 2. That he expressly teaches that this ‘ spiritual sanctification ’ may ‘ go before, and the laver of baptism come after,’ as in the case of Cornelius. 3. That, in infants, he expects the reverse of this to take place: ‘ the sacrament of regeneration goes before, and conversion of the heart, the mystery ’ (or sacrament) ‘ whereof went before in their body, follows after.’ 4. That he suspends their reception of this blessing, or at least the proof that they have received it, entirely upon their ‘ putting in practice the Christian religion;’ or, in other words, upon their performing their baptismal vows—the very thing for which we contend.

Dr. Wall himself makes a remark upon St. Augustine’s language, which well deserves the attention of those, who lay great stress upon baptism and regeneration having been often used by the fathers as convertible terms; as if this proved that, in their judgment, the sacrament and its spiritual grace were inseparable. He says: ‘ Whereas, some people have expressed a wonder at St. Austin, that he should hold that all that are baptized are also regenerate; no man living can read him without perceiving that he uses the word (regenerate) as another word for (baptized), and that this with him would have been an identical proposition; as if one should say now-a-days, ‘ All that are baptized are christened.’ If some of late days have put a new sense on the word (regenerate), how can St. Austin help that? And the church of England uses the word in the old sense.’ *

The following extracts I select out of a number collected

* The concluding remarks I take not to be very correct. We have just seen St. Augustine speaking of ‘ conversion of heart ’ as the thing signified in baptism; and our church defines its inward and spiritual grace, ‘ a death unto sin and new birth unto righteousness.’ If this be the inward grace of baptism, and that inward grace be regeneration, we have not deviated very widely in our use of the word.

ready to my hands from Dupin and Wall, in a periodical publication, to which I have already acknowledged my obligations of this kind.* The former of the writers here referred to was a Roman Catholic, and therefore certainly not disposed to detract from the effects of baptism.

Tertullian, in his book of Penance, ‘shews the necessity
‘there is of proving and preparing oneself for a long time, for
‘the reception of this grace of baptism, by a true repentance. He fears not to say, that *baptism is to no purpose, if we
‘have not repented of our sins and amended them*; and that it
‘is great presumption to imagine, that having led a disorderly course of life till the very day of baptism, we should
‘be made holy all of a sudden, and that we should cease
‘from sinning immediately after we have received this sacrament.’ . . . ‘I confess,’ he says, ‘that God grants remission of sins to those who receive baptism; but they
‘must take pains to be made worthy of it, for who would
‘be so bold as to confer this sacrament on a person of whose repentance he has any reason to make a doubt? You may
‘impose upon the minister, and so procure baptism by false pretences; but God, who knows the heart, keeps
‘his own treasure himself, and does not grant his grace,
‘but only to those that are worthy of it. . . . Lastly, we are
‘not washed from our pollutions by baptism, only that we
‘might sin no more, but because we have our heart *already
‘purified*. Quia jam corde loti sumus.’ Dupin, vol. i. p. 94. †

‘St. Pacian says, “I will shew you in what condition we
‘are born, and how we are renewed by baptism,” &c. He
‘shews, that “sin reigned from Adam till Christ, who delivered mankind from the tyranny of sin; because, as the
‘sin of the first man was imputed to all his posterity, so
‘the righteousness of Jesus Christ was communicated to
‘all men by baptism, and by the aid of the Holy Spirit,—
‘*provided that faith precede*.” He adds, that “this regeneration cannot be *perfected* but by the sacrament of baptism,
‘and unction, and the ministry of the priest.” There is
‘hardly any of the ancients that speaks more clearly of the

* No just exception, I conceive, can be taken to the use which I have made of the Christian Observer. I never appeal to it as *authority*. When I quote its sentiments, I rely entirely for their admission upon their obvious justness, or upon the force of the arguments by which they are supported. In the present instance all I assume is its fidelity in quotation. If that can be impeached, let it be impeached.

† Of course I do not approve of all the language used in this passage.

‘ efficacy of the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and penance. Though he speaks advantageously of the efficacy of the sacraments, yet he requires very great dispositions in order to their producing such effects as they ought to have.’ Dupin, vol. ii. pp. 84, 85.

‘ The ancient church did not give baptism immediately to all those who desired it, but only to those who had given signs of a *sincere faith*, and of *the change of their life* by a long trial, and by a course of penance.’ Ibid. p. 109.

‘ It is difficult to open St. Cyril without discovering his clear opinion, that baptism did not of itself confer the regeneration of the Spirit. He twice at least, in the preface and the third Lecture, notices the case of Simon Magus: “ If you do not go to the waters with a right disposition,” he says, “ it will profit you nothing. Simon Magus once came to the laver: he was baptized, but he was not illuminated: *αλλ’ οκ εφωτισθη*: he washed his body, indeed, with water, but he did not illuminate his heart by the Spirit: his body descended truly (into the water), and ascended, but *his soul was neither buried with Christ, nor risen again with him.*” Cyril, Præf.—Did Cyril consider baptism and regeneration as the same thing? Yet he frequently speaks of baptized persons as regenerate.’

‘ Notwithstanding the declaration of Wall, therefore, ... that the term regeneration was uniformly used as synonymous with baptism, and in no other sense, during the four first centuries, the assertion does not appear to be strictly correct. Cyril, in speaking of the two last verses of the tenth chapter of Acts, in which Peter commands water to be brought, that those who had already received the Holy Ghost might be baptized, says: “ Peter commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesu Christ, that *the soul having been regenerated, αναγεννηθενης, by faith, the body also might partake of grace by the water.*” He speaks of the regeneration of the soul as, in this instance, prior to baptism.’

‘ We leave these extracts to tell their own tale.—1. If it be true that the ancient fathers frequently used the figure metonymy, as Jewel observes, putting the outward sign instead of the thing signified, it is not difficult to account for the “ vehement and great words” which they so generally adopted in speaking of the sacraments.—2. If it be farther true, that with respect to adults, they considered the external rite as destitute of spiritual benefit, unless accompanied by a right disposition of mind in the recipient; it seems to follow of course, that the authority of

‘ the ancients does not warrant that use of the term regeneration which has recently been maintained. It is evident, that they substituted the word too generally for baptism: they did not commonly wait to explain and define: but the theory, which makes regeneration and baptism so inseparable, that Simon Magus must pass for a regenerate person, for a man purified from all his sins, sanctified by the Holy Spirit, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, before he had sinned away the grace given in baptism, is not the creed of the ancients.’

‘ The correct view of the subject seems to be this: That the early fathers required, in adult persons receiving baptism, certain dispositions of mind; and, on the supposition that these dispositions existed previous to baptism, spoke of the baptized persons as regenerate. The necessity of a prior qualification, in their catechisms, if not always expressed, was, by the best writers, at least always implied.

‘ It is true that they also adopted the term regeneration in regard to the baptism of children, who, from their tender years, were incapable of repentance and faith. But we do not consider this circumstance as proving that they accounted baptized children to be necessarily regenerate: it was tacitly, at least, understood, in justification of the term, that the infants baptized should keep, in after life, the covenant into which they entered by baptism.* They spoke, not in the judgment of certainty, but of charity.

‘ In both cases, therefore, it appears to us that the fathers, for a long period, acted on the same principle with our church; but it cannot be denied, that the unguarded manner in which some of them have written has tended to great perversion of the doctrine, and led many to suppose that baptized persons are regenerate of course.’—*Christian Observer*, 1816, p. 657—663.

I subjoin the testimony of the learned Bingham in regard to the opinion of antiquity. ‘ St. Austin calls it the sacrament of grace and absolution, rather than grace and absolution itself: because wicked men may receive the sacrament of baptism, but they cannot receive the grace itself, which is absolution or remission: for God grants that to none but those who turn to him with a sincere faith and true repentance. *Whenever therefore the ancients call*

* See extract from Augustine at beginning of this note.

‘baptism by the name of absolution, THEY ARE TO BE UNDERSTOOD WITH THIS LIMITATION; *that it is so only to those who are worthy receivers of it.*’ Antiquities, B. xi. c. i.

NOTE XXII. Page 136.

Archdeacon Daubeney's treatment of my quotations.

MR. Daubeney having taken considerable pains to shew that my quotations from Hooker and others do not answer the end for which they are adduced, I would here briefly point out the steps by which he has arrived at this conclusion.

1. He assumes that the doctrine for which he contends is the undoubted doctrine of the Church of England.—This he does uniformly throughout his work. He speaks of ‘the sense definitively affixed’ to the word regeneration by the church, without ever thinking it necessary to inquire what that sense is. ‘The doctrine of regeneration plainly laid down in our public formularies:’ ‘the universally established doctrine,’ &c: this is his language. Nay, he says (p. 63.) ‘all reference to the authority of the church becomes unnecessary’—she having ‘spoken plainly’ upon the subject ‘for herself.’

2. He next assumes that these writers, being all good churchmen, ‘could not mean that their interpretation of ‘scripture,’ (when, for instance, they spoke ‘of bad Christians as being unregenerate men,’) ‘should be received in opposition to the established doctrine of the church on ‘the sacrament of baptism.’*—Agreed: but the argument was, that they did not understand that doctrine as Dr. Mant does, or even as Mr. D. does.

3. Having made these two important assumptions in his own favour, he next makes a very important one to my disadvantage: namely this, that I quote these distinguished writers for *quite a different purpose* than I really do quote them.

For example: In Inquiry, p. 198, I state, that it is usual with Dr. Jackson and other eminent divines ‘to speak ‘of bad christians as being *unregenerate men.*’ Mr. D. p. 41, acknowledges that it is so, and that they were ‘fully ‘justified’ in this practice. Yet he concludes, p. 44, that

* P. 41, 85, 89, &c.

the writings of Dr. Jackson (whom he accepts as a specimen of the whole,) ‘do not contribute an *iota* of proof towards the establishment of that particular point, for which they appear to have been pressed into the service.’ I never appealed to Dr. J. or any of the divines mentioned in connection with him, in proof of any thing else than that which Mr. D. three pages before acknowledges to have been their practice!

Again: p. 191, I observe of Hooker, ‘No author is more express as to the *efficacy* of the sacraments, and the *necessity* of our using them, than he is; but by comparing different parts of his works together, it will appear, that he did not *extend* their virtue in that unlimited and indiscriminate manner which some now wish to do.’ I then quote from him the following passages. ‘They (the sacraments) are not physical, but moral instruments of salvation, duties of service and worship: which *unless we perform as the author of grace requireth, they are unprofitable: for all receive not the grace of God, which receive the sacraments of his grace.*’—‘If outward baptism were a cause in itself possessed of that power, either natural or supernatural, without the present operation whereof no such effect could possibly grow; it must then follow, that . . . no man could ever receive grace *before* baptism: which being apparently both *known and confessed to be otherwise,* &c. Lastly: ‘It is on all parts gladly confessed, that there may be in divers cases *life by virtue of inward baptism, even where outward is not found.*’

On the first of these passages I ask, ‘How does this accord with Dr. Mant’s notion, of a sacrament necessarily or constantly conveying the inward grace of which it is a sign?’ And on the other two I put the question, ‘Is not this regeneration *before* baptism, and *without* baptism?’—Let any one, that can, answer these questions in the negative. In fact these sentences declare directly against both parts of Dr. Mant’s position, that baptism is always, both *inclusively* and *exclusively*, the vehicle of regeneration. Here are *the sacraments received, and grace NOT received with them; and here are ‘grace’ and spiritual ‘life’ before and without baptism.*—I made no other use of Hooker’s authority: I did not need to do it: and, of course, it would not suit Mr. D. to meet the question on this ground, on which alone I placed it. In fact he could not do it: for he disclaims as clearly as I do that ‘unlimited and indiscriminate’ extension, which Dr. M.’s principles assign

to the efficacy of sacraments.—How then does he treat the subject?

1. He is pretty *lengthy* where there is little occasion to be so. Thus some dust and confusion are raised.

And 2, he substitutes for *those particular points* to which I had applied the authority of Hooker, as above stated, his own representations of *the general design* of my book; and then asks, Does Hooker support such a design? Thus, p. 51: ‘In short, the object of Mr. Scott’s Inquiry, &c, if I have not misunderstood him, appears to be the setting aside of regeneration by baptism, (the established doctrine of the church of England,) by representing baptism to be merely the form of admission into the visible church, &c. For the purpose of preparing the mind of his reader for the establishment of this desired point, Mr. S. places before him the following passage from Hooker, “All receive not the grace of God, which receive the sacrament of his grace.”’*—No: my “purpose” was to counteract Dr. M.’s position, which is directly contrary to Hooker’s. Again, p. 52: The passage of Hooker is to be found in a section, ‘which has for its title “the necessity of sacraments to the participation of Christ.” Whilst *the object of Mr. S.’s publication* appears to be, to establish, as far as respects the sacrament of baptism, the very contrary position.’—Again, p. 50, on my last quotation from Hooker, ‘It is on all parts gladly confessed that there may be in divers cases life by virtue of inward baptism, even where outward is not found’—as repeated in Inquiry, p. 211—he asks: ‘Who denies that God may communicate his grace to man in any way, and at any time that he pleases? But does Hooker mean to be understood in support of the position which the author in question attempts to maintain, that because a man had received grace before baptism and consequently without baptism, that therefore he was incapable of receiving *it by baptism*?’ These last italics are Mr. D.’s own: and they include a very dexterous *substitution*. He refers to, and in part quotes, a passage which ought to have quashed several of the misrepresentations which have now passed under the reader’s eye. It is this, (Inquiry, p. 230) ‘In those (adults) who “receive baptism rightly,” I believe, with our 27th article, *the inward blessing communicated* to them to be

* He quotes from my title page, where it is erroneously printed *sacrament* instead of *sacraments*.

“ the confirmation of faith, and increase of grace ” already ‘ received. Regeneration, *strictly taken*, in the sense of ‘ the infusion of “ a new principle of life and of action,” ‘ or, as Hooker’s words are, “ the *first* disposition towards future newness of life,” cannot be received by these ‘ persons in baptism, for they already have it before they ‘ are baptized. They are partakers of “ repentance and ‘ faith,” and consequently possess the grace of God before ‘ they come. All they need is, to have these spiritual ‘ graces ‘ confirmed and increased:’ *which they may confidently expect in this sacrament*, “ by virtue of prayer ‘ unto God.”—Is this annihilating the inward grace of the sacrament of baptism? Is this making it ‘ a mere form of ‘ admission into the church?’ Is this denying that grace could be communicated ‘ by baptism,’ to those who had ‘ received grace before baptism?’ It is only denying that the *first* communication could be then made to those, who had received *prior* communications. But Mr. D. has dexterously substituted the pronoun ‘ it,’ referring to ‘ grace,’ for ‘ regeneration, *strictly taken*’ for the *first* infusion of grace.

Mr. D. concludes, ‘ It appears then, from this whole ‘ passage taken together, that Hooker knew nothing of ‘ grace received before baptism, under circumstances where ‘ the sacrament of baptism was to be had.’ (P. 55.) And yet (to say nothing of what has been quoted from Hooker,) a man is to receive baptism with ‘ repentance and faith!’ Repentance and faith therefore are to be possessed and exercised, without any ‘ grace’ having been received from God! *

NOTE XXIII. Page 139.

Bad Christians unregenerate.

‘ It has been no uncommon thing for divines of eminence ‘ to speak of bad christians as being *unregenerate* men; that ‘ is, men, who were not actually in that spiritual state, in

* P. 49. Mr. D. appears to consider it as a peculiarity of mine, to think that repentance and faith ‘ are,’ or rather imply and involve, ‘ the ‘ first disposition to future newness of life!’

In the passage referred to, it will be admitted that Hooker refers to adults, for he speaks of ‘ those who receive not the grace of God by ‘ sacraments,’ *because* they ‘ receive not the sacraments as God requires.’

‘ which those who had been regenerated ought to be.’ In ‘ their application of the language of scripture to this unrestrained and comprehensive sense of the word *regeneration*, the divines in question were FULLY JUSTIFIED.’ Daubeny, p. 41. If they were ‘ fully justified ’ in speaking of any persons as ‘ unregenerate,’ I presume those persons must really have been ‘ unregenerate ’ at the time referred to: and that, being unregenerate, they must have needed to be regenerated, or ‘ born again,’ whatever change they might, or might not, have undergone at some former period.—Further, if the ‘ divines of eminence ’ here referred to were ‘ fully justified ’ in so speaking of ‘ bad christians,’ I presume that the evangelical clergy (so called) cannot deserve to be utterly condemned for speaking of them in the same manner, and for urging on them, in consequence, the necessity of their becoming regenerate. On this ground therefore, Dr. Mant’s uncourteous attack upon his brethren must be ‘ utterly unjustifiable.’

It is not however true that the clergy in question use the term with such frequency as to authorize their opponents to represent it as ‘ their watchword.’ Even when contending for the necessity of that spiritual change which they suppose regeneration to imply, they often avoid the term in order to obviate those cavils to which the use of it might lead. In the words of my acute fellow-labourer Mr. Bugg, ‘ We are not nice about terms,’ and ‘ are wearied with disputes about words without meaning. Only preach in our ears, and suffer us to preach in the ears of our congregations, such a faith, and such a regeneration, (or such a state of heart and mind, by whatever name you choose to call it,) as shall afford evidence of the possessor’s being now in a state of salvation, and we wish no more.’ *Bugg’s Answer to Mant*, p. 126.

It may be just observed, in connection with the former part of this note, that, whatever others may have done, Dr. Mant never, I believe, concedes that regeneration may be lost, though he speaks of ‘ its privileges being forfeited.’ Nor could he admit that it might be lost, because then he must allow that it needed to be communicated afresh: and as, according to his views, it can be conveyed only by baptism, and baptism is never to be repeated, he who has once actually lost the grace of regeneration, must be in the state of a man that has committed the unpardonable sin! If any one therefore in this controversy holds the doctrine of ‘ inflexible grace,’ it is Dr. Mant.

NOTE XXIV. Page 147.

Report of Committee of Revision, Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

THE tendency of Dr. Mant's tract, and its alleged inconsistency with numerous tracts and books previously on the society's lists, have caused considerable discussions at the monthly board; and it was at length referred to the committee of revision to consider whether there did or did not exist any doctrinal inconsistencies in the tracts of the society, particularly on the subject of regeneration. This committee made their report on the 14th of May last to the following effect: 'Your committee having received the direction of the board to examine the books and tracts on the society's catalogue, in order to ascertain whether there be any inconsistency or contradiction therein, particularly on the doctrine of regeneration, and to make a report thereupon to the board, have proceeded carefully to examine the same, as far as respects the doctrine of regeneration, and do report, that there is nothing to impeach the consistency of the tracts, or involve them in contradiction with each other, on the point of doctrine; although, in some instances, the term regeneration is used, sometimes strictly and properly, as applied in our liturgical offices to the grace conveyed in the sacrament of baptism; and at other times in a larger and laxer sense, by different, and occasionally by the same authors.'

On this report, which was immediately adopted as 'satisfactory' by the board, the following observations, among others, have been made.

'Although Dr. Mant's tract, which produced the reference, is not once mentioned in the report, the report, nevertheless, virtually affirms its doctrinal consistency with all the other books and tracts of the society. And yet can any doctrinal inconsistency be pointed out more palpable than this case exhibits? Dr. Mant's tract maintains, that regeneration, which he explains to mean "a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness," is, invariably and exclusively, conveyed by baptism: and that every individual to whom baptism is rightly administered, is, *ipso facto*, born of God, and can never afterwards be considered as unregenerate. Various other books and tracts of the society deny the invariable and exclusive connection of this spiritual regeneration, this death unto sin and new birth unto righteousness, with

‘ the rite of baptism, and connect it no less with other means, as faith, the word of God, prayer, &c.; and represent baptism as a covenant, the blessings of which depend not (simply) on the right administration, but on the right reception of the sacrament, and all those as still unregenerate, who, though baptized with water, do not prove themselves, by the holiness of their lives, to be partakers of a new and divine nature.

‘ But not only is Dr. Mant’s tract doctrinally inconsistent with various preceding books and tracts of the society, but with the society’s present report. The report admits a two-fold sense of the term regeneration. Dr. Mant’s tract admits but one, and condemns those as *heretics* who differ from him in this respect.’

NOTE XXV. Page 148.

1 John v. i.

ARCHDEACON Daubeny (*Considerations*, p. 56—62,) treats the whole of my reasoning on this passage of St. John as vitiated by the introduction of the term ‘previously,’ or ‘previously to baptism,’ into the *conclusion*, when it had not appeared in the *minor* proposition. True, it had not appeared; but was it not *implied* in the tense “*hath been*,” of which it is merely explanatory when it does appear? If faith *precede* baptism, and regeneration be *wherever faith is*, regeneration must, in all such cases, *precede* baptism.—This reasoning, I conceive, is not to be disturbed.

But the Archdeacon ‘thinks, on reference to the apostle, it may be made appear, that he had not the subject of *baptismal regeneration* in his contemplation on the occasion.’ Undoubtedly! This is one principal point contended for, that the apostle, in speaking of being “born of God,” (the same thing, by Dr. Mant’s concession, with being *regenerated*,) does in no way necessarily connect it with baptism, nor even appear to have had baptism at all ‘in his contemplation on the occasion.’

In addition to the sentences of Hooker which follow in the text, I beg leave to recal to the reader’s recollection the following of St. Austin:—‘In Cornelius, the spiritual sanctification by the gift of the Holy Spirit *went before*, and the sacrament of regeneration by the laver of baptism came after:’ of Bishop Hooper:—‘Repentance and faith *precede* this external sign (of baptism), and in Christ the purgation was inwardly obtained *before* the external

‘sign was given :’ and of Bishop Jewel :—‘ In plain speech
 ‘ it is not the receiving of the sacrament that worketh our
 ‘ joining with God : for whosoever is not joined unto God
 ‘ before he receiveth the SACRAMENTS, he eateth and drink-
 ‘ eth his own judgment. The sacraments be *seals* and *wit-*
 ‘ nesses, and not properly the causes of this conjunction.’

NOTE XXVI. Page 160.

Archdeacon Daubeny.—Appeal to experience.

IN the passage to which this note refers, I have said,
 ‘ The observation may possibly have reached Dr. M.’s
 ‘ ears, that HIS doctrine respecting one sacrament a good
 ‘ deal resembles that of the papists respecting the other, or
 ‘ indeed respecting both.’ Archdeacon Daubeny, (*Consi-*
derations, p. 24) quotes the passage, with this introduction :
 ‘ A writer, who has distinguished himself on the subject in
 ‘ question, gives his reader to understand THAT THE DOC-
 ‘ TRINE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, on the sacrament
 ‘ of baptism, which speaks of every one whom she has
 ‘ admitted to baptism, as born again, and regenerated by
 ‘ God’s Holy Spirit, a good deal resembles that of the pa-
 ‘ pists,’ &c. ! Upon such a perversion I will make no re-
 mark. Yet Mr. D.’s preceding sentence opens thus : ‘ I
 ‘ should indeed be sorry to mistake, much more to misrepresent,
 ‘ the divines from whom I happen to differ on the present
 ‘ subject !’—Nor is this a single instance. Mr. D. perseveres
 in his misrepresentation. ‘ When those divines’ (he says,
 p. 27, 28,) ‘ who think proper publicly to object to the
 ‘ doctrine of regeneration so plainly laid down in our baptis-
 ‘ mal formulary, presented themselves for admission into
 ‘ the ministry of the church of England, had they then
 ‘ thought that *the doctrine in question* bore a near affinity
 ‘ to the external formality of the church of Rome, as they
 ‘ now represent IT to do, how came it to pass that they
 ‘ entered voluntarily into the ministry of so corrupt a church?
 ‘ Or thinking thus of the church of England, did they flatter
 ‘ themselves that the authority of their private opinion,’ &c.
 —Again, p. 30 : ‘ On this ground I conceive the strength
 ‘ of the objection MADE TO OUR BAPTISMAL SERVICE stands.’
 He means the objection I had made to Dr. M.’s doctrine,
 as resembling the *opus operatum* of the church of Rome ! *

* P. 9. He speaks of an apprehension entertained of ‘ *the sacrament*
 ‘ of baptism’ itself ‘ bearing too near an affinity to the *opus operatum*,’
 &c.

—Yet again: ‘Before ministers of the establishment *commit themselves against the language which the church has thought proper to employ*, would it not be adviseable,’ &c. (Ibid.) Yet again: ‘Having now vindicated OUR CHURCH from those dreadful consequences which are supposed to attach to HER doctrine of spiritual regeneration in baptism,’ &c. (P. 35, 36.)—P. 71. ‘The known axiom is, *Exceptio probat regulam*. Whereas the objection made to THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH is built on those exceptions.’*—A writer who so totally mistakes, or so grossly misrepresents, the whole question at issue; who employs himself in defending what was never attacked, and throwing down what had never been set up; can certainly have little right to expect the attention of dispassionate and candid inquirers.

But the principle of the whole passage, with which this note stands connected, has given, it seems, much umbrage. The argument is briefly this, in the words of Bishop Hopkins: “If this baptismal regeneration be real,” say, be absolute and unconditional, ‘by the infusion of habitual grace,† how comes it to pass that the greater part of those who have received it lead profane and unholy lives, and too, too many perish in their sins?’—This, in fact, is and ever will be, so long as either scripture or common sense is listened to, the insurmountable obstacle to the general admission of an ‘absolute and unconditional’ regeneration by baptism: and I venture to say that even those who do not yield to the argument as *conclusive*, cannot help feeling that it possesses *great* force.—But such an appeal to *experience*, it is contended, is inadmissible. The Dean of Chester (excluding, indeed, the notion of actual *sanctification* from regeneration,) maintains that regeneration is ‘an object of faith only, not of feeling or observation.’‡ Mr. Daubeney, though including ‘the giving and receiving of a new life’ in his notion of regeneration, yet contends, that experience can ‘authorise no conclusion’ here.§ One writer even affects to parallel my appeal to *experience* with Hume’s rejection of miracles, as ‘contrary to experience.’ And,

* The exceptions are pointed out to invalidate Dr. Mant’s doctrine, and to *establish* that of the church in opposition to it.

† Dr. Mant calls it, ‘a new principle of life, and of action:’ and Mr. Daubeney (p. 35) says it is ‘the giving and receiving of a new life.’ He also expressly ‘admits the fact,’ (p. 26) that ‘very seldom is this regeneration seen to exert any salutary influence on the heart and life.’

‡ Letter to Faber, p. 17, 21.

§ P. 37, &c.

finally, a main attack made upon my argument is, that it *implies Calvinistic principles*. Mr. Daubeney apprehends, and Dr. Laurence is sure, that it must fasten upon me the obnoxious doctrine of ‘indefectible grace,’ or final perseverance.

Now on doctrines peculiar to Calvinism I neither have delivered, nor will in this work deliver any opinion whatever; because certainly the controversy is quite independent of such doctrines. I have not here implied the doctrine of final perseverance. I have not demanded to see the mighty effect of baptism, if produced in infancy, in *every* instance displaying itself in mature age, as that doctrine would require. I have only argued, that it is most extraordinary, assuming the truth of our opponents’ principles, if no visible difference exists between *the mass* of the baptized, and *the mass* of the unbaptized, in a Christian country. I have urged that little stress is to be laid on a change, supposing it made, which so generally disappears again, or rather fails of appearing at all in any perceptible effects. And I have pronounced, and still do pronounce, it *gross antinomianism* to teach adults to place any considerable reliance upon such a change said to be wrought in them in infancy; to be ‘filled,’ irrespectively of their present character, ‘with all joy and peace in believing that they have experienced it;’ and, on the ground of ‘the single act then performed upon ‘them,’ to conclude, that all which is intended in a variety of the most important scriptural figures and sentences, has been fulfilled in them, and need occasion them no further anxiety. This I must consider as of the most fatally delusive tendency.

My appeal to ‘experience’ was nothing more than an appeal to our Lord’s principle, “By their fruits ye shall know ‘them.’” It meant, in Bishop Wilson’s words, that ‘the ‘only certain proof of regeneration is victory’—victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. Mr. Daubeney may, if he pleases, amuse himself with the observations, that ‘seed’ may have been sown, though no fruit be produced; that a ‘barren tree’ may have once had ‘a fructifying quality imparted to it;’ and with other like subtleties. But, if no fruit has been produced, the seed must be sown again, or all will be in vain; if the tree have *lost* ‘its ‘fructifying quality’ it must receive it afresh, or be fit only to be “hewn down and cast into the fire;” and if those who are supposed to have been *once* regenerate, have become ‘*unregenerate*,’ (as he allows we may properly call ‘bad Christians,’) then either they were never regenerate at all,

or they must be regenerated a second time, or else excluded from the kingdom of God.

But here again Mr. D. applies himself to defend 'the church of England,' instead of (what would be a very different task,) defending Dr. Mant, whose principles alone had been attacked. 'It appears,' he says, (p. 35,) 'that our church has taken especial care to guard, as far as might be, against those dreadful consequences supposed to result from the baptized person being placed in a state of security, by his spiritual regeneration in baptism.' No doubt of it: *the church* has done so: but the question was, What had Dr. M. done?

The present subject has been treated by a candid and able reviewer in a manner in which I can by no means acquiesce.—'It is said, if such be the benefits of baptism, if infants be regenerated in it, how happens it that in many of them when they are grown up, the signs of such a change are not more visible? A question keenly put, and which seems to reduce us to a necessity of giving up our first persuasion, unless we can give such a particular proof of it. The case however does not reduce itself to that dilemma. We hold it to be most dangerous to our own charity and humility, to be inclined to take up the cognizance of the state of others under a very precise rule, by signs of their regeneration; and that which is adverse to those duties in ourselves, cannot be sound in divinity. Let us be severe in examining our own state, and demand the proofs, of it: but to presume against others, because we do not see the marks of their Christian character written in language which we can understand, that therefore they are lost, is to judge where we are not required, and by an insufficient criterion.'—(*Quarterly Review*, July, 1816, p. 499.)—There is something in all this which sounds very 'charitable,' and which therefore is sure to commend itself to the present age; but it is withal, I fear, very fallacious and of very baneful tendency. God forbid that we should assume the prerogative of judging definitively of other men's characters, and still more that we should abuse it to the making of unfavourable decisions in doubtful cases. I trust this would be found repugnant to all our feelings. But does it follow that there are no means of distinguishing between "the righteous and the wicked" in *any* case? And are not even *multitudes* of baptized persons living in such a

way, that it would be sacrificing truth and common sense at the shrine of a spurious charity, to affect to doubt whether they shew any signs, at present, of a regenerate state or not? I fear these instances are of themselves sufficiently numerous to warrant my argument.—Further: we are to be ‘severe in examining our own state,’ and tender in judging of that of others: the advice is excellent. But are we not also, as teachers, to instruct others to act by the same rule? are we not to point out to them, from the sacred scriptures, the true means of deciding concerning their own state, whether they are the servants of God, or the slaves of sin; true Christians, or Christians only in name?—I cannot but feel extremely jealous of such a passage as I am commenting upon, lest it be employed, as similar sentiments frequently are, to counteract and condemn the labours of those who are anxious to guard men against contenting themselves with “a name to live,” when they are, in reality, spiritually dead. I must hold to the divine rule, “by their fruits ye shall know them:” and I must think, with Bishop Wilson, ‘that the only certain proof of regeneration is victory.’

NOTE XXVII. Page 162.

Tendency of the Tracts.

‘LET us imagine the common case of a manufacturing town or village immersed in profligacy, and in that general brutality of character which is the inseparable consequence of vice; destitute of moral sensibility, dead to religion, and differing from avowed infidels in nothing except a nominal unmeaning recognition of the Christian revelation. A zealous and faithful clergyman presides over them, whose first and dearest object is to effect, by the divine blessing, an universal renovation of character amongst his flock. He exerts himself to convince them that their habits are inconsistent with the hopes of a blissful futurity; that they need a complete transformation of character; that not only must their exterior deportment be reformed, but that the internal dispositions from which it sprang must be eradicated; that their hearts must be changed before their conduct will be duly amended; that their reformation must not be partial or insincere, but that the very fountains of thought and feeling and action

‘ must be purified, in order that the “ acceptable fruits of
‘ righteousness ” may appear in the conduct. To impress
‘ duly upon his hearers the radical and extensive nature of
‘ this moral change, he perhaps characterizes it by the
‘ scriptural expressions “ regeneration,” a “ new birth,”
‘ and uses the pointed language of Divinity itself, that
‘ “ except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom
‘ of God.” In all this there is evidently nothing unscriptural or irrational. Even admitting with Dr. Mant that
‘ the peculiar terms thus used, in inculcating the necessity
‘ of some great change of heart and conduct, before such
‘ persons can be meet for the inheritance amongst the saints
‘ in light, were originally intended to be expressive of nothing more than the effects of baptism, still we see not
‘ what great practical evil could arise from their present
‘ application Now what must be the natural, the legitimate effect of a few scores of Dr. Mant’s pamphlets being
‘ circulated in such a parish ? Why obviously the undoing,
‘ as far as possible, all that had been done. An argument
‘ would be immediately furnished to every profligate person
‘ in the parish against the preaching of his minister, the
‘ safety of his own soul, and the eternal welfare of his
‘ neighbour. An obvious question of debate in every resort
‘ of licentiousness would be, why should our minister disturb our repose, with inculcating the unpleasant duty of
‘ what he calls regeneration, when we are all regenerate
‘ already ? Dr. Mant has learnedly proved us to be genuine
‘ Christians, notwithstanding those blemishes of character
‘ which our minister affects to consider of such vast importance. “ Let us eat, drink, and be merry,” for spiritual
‘ regeneration into the family of God is a character which
‘ we received at our baptism, and which can never be repeated ; for, as Dr. Mant remarks, “ no other than baptismal regeneration is possible in this world ” Dr. Mant
‘ we know would be the first to disclaim this or any other
‘ inference hostile to Christian holiness, and we again assert
‘ that we are far from intending to impute any thing of the
‘ kind to him ; but we seriously think that such an inference
‘ would necessarily be derived by no small number of his
‘ readers What moral or religious utility could our author propose to himself by such a publication ? allowing
‘ it to be correct, it is still inexpedient. Indeed, as we
‘ before observed, it is obviously a party work : not designed to impress upon the lower orders the necessity of personal religion, but to warn them against those of their
‘ legally-appointed teachers who speak of the importance

of the subject in less measured terms than Dr. Mant is inclined to allow. How far any individual of the Bartlett's Buildings Committee was justified in moving that the sacred funds of religious charity should be expended upon such a tract, we are not disposed to inquire . . . We appeal to Dr. Mant as a man of moral and religious feeling, and ask what benefit can he possibly expect by pressing so earnestly upon the attention of a drunkard for instance, or blasphemer, or debauchee, that because he has been baptized he is fully in possession of "spiritual regeneration," a "supernatural grace," a "new principle of life and action," of that "sanctification" of the Spirit which "makes us heirs of salvation," and entitles us to "eternal life;" in a word, that "no other than baptismal regeneration is possible in this world." *British Review*, vol. vii. p. 517, &c.

NOTE XXVIII. Page 164.

Twenty-seventh Article.

IN the paragraph to which this note is annexed, Mr. Daubeny says, I 'use language to which, if he does not misunderstand me, he feels pleasure in subscribing.' And again: 'Hence it appears, that internal sanctification, which baptism represents, and of which it is the outward and visible attestation,* is ratified in heaven, in the case of all who receive baptism rightly. *And this is all,*' he adds, *that our church means should be understood on this head.*' Considerations, p. 69, 70. Might it not, then, have been as well, if on the ground of this, and of the two preceeding paragraphs, Mr. D. had abstained from reiterating the unfounded charges which have been so liberally preferred against me of 'annihilating baptism as a sacrament,' 'depriving it of its sacramental character,' 'denying its spiritual grace,' and 'reducing it to a mere ceremony or form of initiation' into the church, 'or, more properly speaking, the public enrolment of the name of the baptized person into the register of a particular parish?' (Daubeny, pp. 9, 10, 13, 23, 45, 52, 66, 81, 97, &c. Laurence, *passim*.)

* My words are an 'attestation, which is given BY the church, and 'ratified in heaven,' &c. Both Mr. D. and Dr. Laurence quote me as making it 'a mere attestation to the church.'

As I have no where in the body of my work taken that distinct notice of our twenty-seventh Article, which so comprehensive and accurate a summary deserves, I beg leave here to place it in the reader's view, and to offer a few observations upon it.

'Article xxvii. *Of Baptism.* Baptism is not only a sign of 'profession, and mark of difference, whereby christian men 'are discerned from others that be not christened, but it is 'also a sign of regeneration or new birth, whereby,' ('*per quod,*' by which sign,) 'as by an instrument, they that receive baptism rightly, are grafted into the church; the 'promises of forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be 'the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed 'and sealed: faith is confirmed, and grace increased by 'virtue of prayer unto God.—The baptism of young 'children is in any wise to be retained in the church, as 'most agreeable with the institution of Christ.'

I remark, 1. That the subjects, in direct reference to whom (with the exception of the last clause,) baptism is here treated of, are evidently adults, who 'receive baptism 'rightly,' and in whom therefore 'repentance and faith' already exist.

2. 'Regeneration or new birth' is here introduced in immediate connection with baptism. But in what way? In a way which can give little satisfaction to those who represent it as 'the peculiar and appropriate grace,' which 'can, properly speaking, be conveyed by this sacrament alone.' *Baptism,* it is said, *is a sign of regeneration or new birth.* This, and no more, the article affirms.

3. 'Forgiveness of sin, and our adoption to be the sons of God,' are likewise blessings spoken of in this connection. But what is taught concerning them? Are they asserted to be now *first* conveyed to the baptized person? Is it intimated that his 'repentance and faith,' however sincere, have been previously 'ineffectual' to give him any interest in these blessings, and 'in the divine favour?'* Nothing of the kind. '*The promises of the forgiveness of sin, and 'of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, 'ARE VISIBLY SIGNED AND SEALED.'*

4. Is then the sacrament of baptism 'stripped of all spiritual grace' and reduced to 'a mere sign,' a simple

* Laurence

‘ mark of difference ’ among men, nothing more than ‘ an ‘ attestation to the church,’ because it is not described as the *exclusive* vehicle of regeneration? Far from it! Recur again to its words. ‘ Thereby . . . the promises of the forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of ‘ God by the Holy Ghost are visibly *signed and sealed*; ‘ FAITH IS CONFIRMED, AND GRACE INCREASED, by virtue ‘ of prayer unto God.’—The article is not so anti-scriptural and absurd as to suppose, that they, who are already exercising ‘ repentance and faith,’ are yet “ dead in trespasses and sins,” and have still to receive the FIRST communication of divine grace: they already have it: but, in this sacrament, ‘ the promises ’ of God, in which they had previously an actual interest, ‘ are *visibly signed and sealed* ’ to them; *faith is CONFIRMED and grace INCREASED* ’ in them. So far as this is *regeneration*—‘ a death unto sin and a new ‘ birth unto righteousness ’—they are regenerated in this very ordinance, and no further. Such is manifestly the doctrine of the article, and I have never maintained any lower doctrine.

Ascribing the efficacy of the sacraments so much to the ‘ virtue of prayer unto God; ’ suspending the blessing so much on the faithfulness of the prayers by which it is accompanied, might deserve notice; but I forbear further to press that point.

5. On the ‘ sign of profession,’ the ‘ mark of difference,’ and the ‘ grafting into the church,’ of which the article speaks, I offer no remark: we all are agreed, that baptism answers these ends, though ‘ not only ’ these, but higher ends also. But this comprehensive article will enable us to answer another question which is sometimes asked. Baptism, it is said, is ‘ a sign, a means, a pledge ’ of ‘ a death ‘ unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness: ’ these are blessings which come under the head of *sanctification*: what then has it to do with the forgiveness of sins, or *justification*—a blessing ‘ distinct though inseparable ’ from the former? The article will inform us. ‘ Herein the promises of forgiveness and adoption are *visibly signed and sealed*.’ It is, to all such as ‘ receive it rightly,’ a divinely appointed attestation of their interest in those blessings.

This may explain the clause in the Nicene creed, ‘ One ‘ baptism for the remission of sins; ’ the prayer, in the baptismal service, for ‘ remission of sins by spiritual regeneration; ’ and the expression, ‘ after that we are *baptized or justified*, ’ which occurs in the Homily of Salvation. Baptism ‘ visibly signs and seals ’ to us forgiveness, justifi-

cation, adoption, and other blessings consequent upon these. —It may further illustrate some passages of scripture, which have before engaged our attention. Acts ii. 38: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, *for the remission of sins.*" Acts xxii. 16: "Arise, and be baptized, and *wash away thy sins*, calling on the name of the Lord."—Baptism is said *to do* what it *attests to be done*. So Bishop Jewel explains the fathers: 'The holy fathers say that the sacraments of the new law *work* salvation, because they teach us that our salvation *is . . . wrought:*' and still more directly to the point he quotes the words of Aquinas, 'We say, a thing is *done*, when it is *perfected*, or *KNOWN to be done.*' Defence, &c. p. 67.

NOTE XXIX. Page 165.

Disposition in Infants.

FROM those who object to every such idea as I have stated in the text, I would fain learn, what conception they form of 'holiness,' 'the sanctification of the Spirit,' 'a new principle of life and of action,' 'a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness;' apart from all connection with the *dispositions* of the mind.—What also will they say to Hooker's 'infused virtue of the Holy Ghost, which giveth to the powers of the soul their first DISPOSITION towards future newness of life,' and which he considers as a benefit to be received in baptism?—But whoever may object to the supposition Mr. Daubeny will not. He expressly maintains that 'such a *change (of heart)* in some degree takes place' in infants; and that to suppose the contrary implies 'that the Holy Spirit, in the case of infants, must have performed his work imperfectly.' *Consid.* p. 68, 69.

The Church of England defines spiritual regeneration 'a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness. She teaches therefore that the great *moral change* expressed by these words (a change which many will think I have not described too strongly, when I term it *an entire change of the mind*) is experienced by every regenerated infant . . . In consequence of the fall of Adam, every infant is born with a moral taint, or (in the language of holy writ) is by nature a child of wrath. If Adam had never fallen, each infant descended from him would have been born *without* this moral taint. But between two infants thus differently

• circumstanced, there is a moral difference in the condition
 • of their respective souls. . . Now where is the difficulty of
 • conceiving, that the soul of an infant may be as much
 • cleansed by regeneration from this moral taint as the soul
 • of an adult? . . . The change will doubtless be made *ad*
 • *modum recipientis*, but it is quite as easy to suppose, that
 • the birth-tainted soul of an infant may be *made*, as that
 • the soul of an infant may be *produced* pure.' *Faber's Reply*
 to the Dean of Chichester.—Mr. F. refers for 'some ex-
 • cellent remarks on this subject' to Archdeacon Pott's
Observations, p. 19.

NOTE XXX. Page 166.

Original Sin washed away.

THE last sentence quoted in the text describes, I presume, that 'washing away of original sin by baptism,' of which so much is so indefinitely said by many writers, but concerning which, under the silence of scripture, little explanation can be given, and little satisfaction attained. The substance of what can be soberly delivered on the subject would appear to be, nearly in the words cited in the text—'that the person, thus admitted into covenant with God through the second Adam, shall not perish by the sin of the first, but only (if he do perish,) by his own actual sin of heart and life.'—The language in question, if used in any sound sense, must refer to the remission of *guilt* derived or imputed to the party baptized through Adam's offence, not to the abrogation of *depravity*; for that baptized and unbaptized persons are alike depraved we too manifestly see.—But then most Christians, I apprehend,* are willing to believe, that this remission of original guilt is not confined to infants baptized, but extended to all who die without actual sin. And, if so, it will follow, that baptism has the same relation to it, as to the remission of guilt incurred by actual transgression, and no other: namely, it is the *pledge* and attestation,—'the sign and seal' of it, not the exclusive medium of its conveyance.—Nor is there any thing in this contrary to that rubric of the church in which she pronounces it 'certain by God's word, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin,

* Biddulph's Answer to Mant; Laurence's Vindication; the author's Reply to Laurence, &c.

‘are undoubtedly saved.’ She speaks with confidence of those who are thus admitted into the covenant, receiving its ‘sign and seal,’ and who never by actual transgression violate their engagement; but she pronounces nothing to the prejudice of others, with whose case she had not to do, and respecting whom the scriptures had given her no information.

Agreeable to this sentiment, that baptism is said to wash away the guilt of original sin in infants, only as it washes away the guilt of actual sin in the penitent believer,* namely as the visible sign and seal of forgiveness, is the fact, that the children of christian parents are spoken of in scripture as, in a certain sense, “holy” even by birth, and not merely made so by baptism: and on this their relative holiness their right to baptism has been usually grounded.—I subjoin a quotation from Hooker, B. v. § 60, p. 252, 253.

‘Of the will of God to impart his grace unto infants without baptism’ in cases wherein it cannot be had, ‘the very circumstance of their natural birth may serve as a just argument; whereupon it is not to be misliked, that men in charitable presumption do gather a great likelihood of their salvation, to whom the benefit of christian parentage being given, the rest that should follow is prevented by such casualty, as man hath of himself no power to avoid. For we are plainly taught of God, (1 Cor. vii. 12,) that the seed of faithful parentage is holy from the very birth. Which albeit we may not so understand, as if the children of believing parents were *without sin*;—or grace from baptized parents derived by propagation;—or God, by covenant and promise, tied to save any in mere regard of their parents’ belief: yet seeing that to all professors of the name of Christ this pre-eminence above infidels is freely given; the fruit of their bodies bringeth into the world with it a present interest and right to those means wherewith the ordinance of Christ is that his church shall be sanctified, it is not to be thought that he which, as it were, from heaven, hath nominated and designed (designated) them to holiness by special privilege of their very birth, will himself deprive them of regeneration and inward grace, only because necessity depriveth them of outward sacraments.’

February, 1817.

* Acts xxii. 16.

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